

9

15

18

The most stars
awarded to a chef by
the MICHELIN guide.

BMW 2009
The all-new 7 Series

bmwusa.com
1-800-334-4BMW



**The Ultimate
Driving Machine**



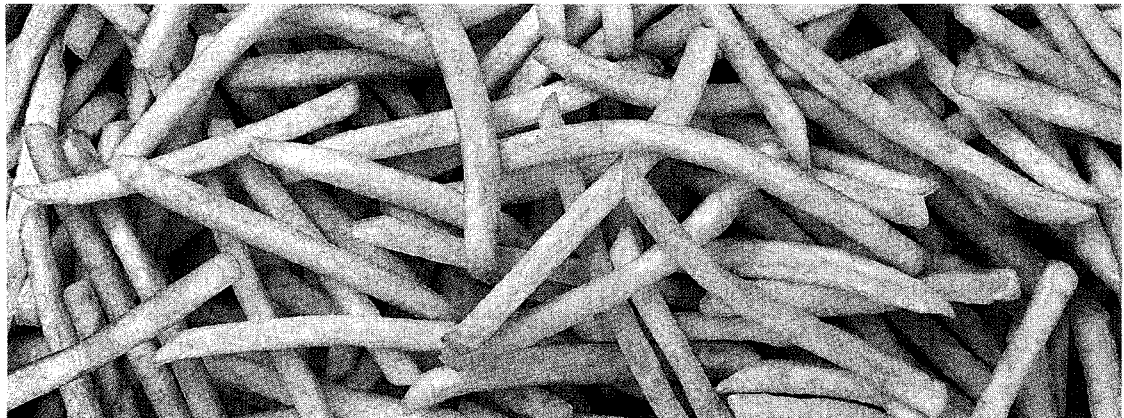
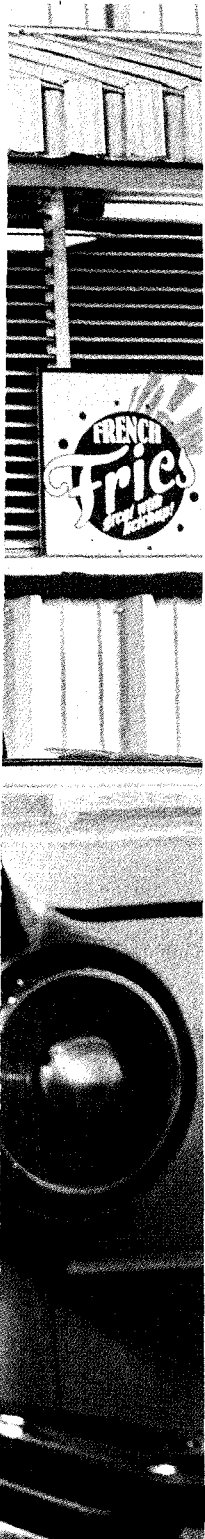
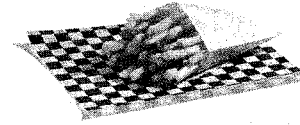
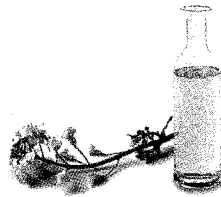
Introducing the all-new BMW 7 Series. There are people who always aspire to achieve more. One of them is Joël Robuchon, whose visions of impeccable taste and high-quality cuisine have brought him more Michelin stars than any other chef. Like him, we enhanced our trademark attributes in the development of the all-new BMW 7 Series. The result is a performance vehicle with an unrivaled level of precision and detail. This meticulous approach is evidenced by the fact our designers examined countless varieties of wood for the interior trim before selecting an especially warm species. Furthermore, the advanced suspension system was carefully constructed in order to provide a driving experience that's both dynamic and remarkably refined. The all-new BMW 7 Series — a vehicle for those who never stand still.

©2009 BMW of North America, LLC. The BMW name, model names and logo are registered trademarks.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

**WE MERELY HAD TO
IMPROVE A FOOD THE WHOLE
COUNTRY GREW UP LOVING.
NO PRESSURE.**





Next to the revered hamburger, nothing is more classic to fast food than the french fry. So when a major restaurant chain wanted to create french fries with zero grams trans fat per serving, they knew they couldn't change the taste consumers loved. They called on Cargill, who worked with them to develop a special frying oil. Extensive canola seed research, new processing technologies and an identity preserved supply chain resulted in a cooking oil that performed well for fries, chicken and fish. Consumer tests proved our approach was successful in providing the same great taste. Now our customer serves fries consumers can feel good about, while still enjoying that classic flavor. This is how Cargill works with customers.

c o l l a b o r a t e > c r e a t e > s u c c e e d TM

food, agriculture & risk management solutions

Cargill

A key part of a sound retirement plan. In any market.

Regardless of market conditions, you still need to save for retirement. Our deferred variable annuity is a tax-smart and cost-effective way to seek long-term growth.

Tax deferral. Any earnings are not taxed until withdrawn in retirement.

Low costs. Our annuity costs are lower than 99% of annuities,² so you keep more of your savings. Some annuities—but not ours—include a guaranteed minimum death benefit, which can lead to higher costs.

Diversified investment options. Choose from a wide range of investments to help build your portfolio or choose professionally managed single-fund solutions.

Whatever your destination, Fidelity has the people,
guidance and investments to help you find your way.

CALL **800.396.9716**

CLICK **Fidelity.com/annuities24** to open an account online

VISIT **Investor Centers** located nationwide

Turn here™



¹ Fidelity Personal Retirement Annuity (Policy Form No. DVA-2005, et al.) and, in New York, Personal Retirement Annuity (Policy Form No. EDVA-2005, et al.). Fidelity Brokerage Services, Member NYSE, SIPC, and Fidelity Insurance Agency, Inc., are the distributors.

² According to Morningstar, Inc., Fidelity Personal Retirement Annuity's annual annuity charge of 0.35% is among the lowest 1% compared to the industry average of 1.39% for nongroup open variable annuity contracts as of 12/31/07. Underlying fund expenses also apply.

Any gains are taxed at ordinary income tax rates when withdrawn. In addition, taxable amounts withdrawn prior to age 59½ may be subject to a 10% IRS penalty.

Before investing, consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses of the annuity and its investment options. Call or write to Fidelity or visit Fidelity.com for a free prospectus containing this information. Read it carefully. Annuities are subject to investment risk. Your principal value may decline. Insurance products are issued by Fidelity Investments Life Insurance Company (FIL) and, in New York, by Empire Fidelity Investments Life Insurance Company,® New York, N.Y. FIL is licensed in all states except New York. The contract's financial guarantees are solely the responsibility of the issuing insurance company.





ge.com

WITH 3,000 VISIONARIES AT FOUR TECHNOLOGY CENTERS

WORLDWIDE, GE GLOBAL RESEARCH IS

DELIVERING INNOVATION TO

REDEFINE WHAT'S

POSSIBLE

NOW.



imagination at work

CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTS

12...LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

17...QUICK STUDY

The freest market; lottery
melancholy

GALLERY

44...The Hole

Gets Blacker

By Seymour Chwast

51...Camo Dove

By Yuko Shimizu

59...Chainge

By Thomas Fuchs

81...Fresh Furniture!

By Istvan Banyai

POETRY

46...Memory

By Wyatt Prunty

68...False Fire

By David Yezzi

100...WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

Food for the apocalypse,
and other advice

By Jeffrey Goldberg



In an inferno, material things drag on the soul, page 20.

Dispatches

20...Smoke Gets in Your Eyes

Post-fire life in Santa Barbara
will never be the same—or will it?

By T. C. Boyle

21...Prophet Without Honor

Among the polygamists in Hildale
and Colorado City

By Andrew Gumbel

22...Million Dollar Babies

Should top basketball prospects
go to college? Should they even
go to high school?

By Stefan Fatsis

23...Cannabusiness

Assembling a Hydro Hut, buying
a gun safe, cleaning up after
neighborhood dogs—the ABCs
of opening a pot franchise

By Joshua Green

24...The Mugabe of the Andes?

Why President Evo Morales's racial
politics in Bolivia may backfire

By Eliza Barclay

DRINK

25...Spirits of the Dead

The subtle art of reviving
long-deceased cocktails

By Wayne Curtis

TRAVEL

26...Simplify, Simplify

In the countryside of Finland,
solitude is a national pastime.

By Trevor Corson

TECHNOLOGY

30...Thinking Outside the Box

Are you ready for 3-D TV?

By Josh Levin

Cover photograph
by Mark Hooper



AMERICAN OIL AND NATURAL GAS

FUEL FOR OUR ECONOMY (IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE)

Oil and natural gas fuel our economy in many ways – transportation, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, just to name a few. And a new study shows how developing off-limits domestic oil and natural gas resources – which we can do in an environmentally responsible manner – could dramatically boost our economy.

The ICF International study* shows that developing off-limits federal oil and natural gas would create 160,000 new, good-paying jobs; increase American energy security; and generate \$1.7 trillion for local, state and federal budgets. Develop all potential federal oil and natural gas resources and that number could exceed a staggering \$4 trillion.

It's time to put America's energy to work for Americans – and America's



Times are turning dialectical again, and capitalism's uncomfortable symbiosis with Marx grows ever more glaring, page 88.

Columns

COMMERCE AND CULTURE

32...Macroeconomics

Economic policy makers thought they had tamed the business cycle. Not quite. Let's hope their hubris doesn't get in the way of our economic recovery.

By Virginia Postrel

MOVING PICTURES

36...Don't Fear the Reaper

Learning to love the slasher-film renaissance

By James Parker

Books

83...Theirs Truly

The letters between Robert Lowell and Elizabeth Bishop are one of the great poetic correspondences of all time—and became the real essence of their relationship.

By Thomas Mallon

88...He's Back

The financial crisis and the enduring relevance of Marx

By Christopher Hitchens

96...Cover to Cover

Playboy as parable; post-secular Sundays; genetic aesthetics; lax Britannica; and more

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THEATLANTIC.COM



VIDEO

Back From the Dead

James Parker dissects scenes from some of the most disturbing (and beloved) horror films—and explains the genre's bloody revival.



SLIDESHOW

¡Evo Sí!

Evan Abramson narrates a photo essay of indigenous reactions to Bolivia's roiling politics, and to its leader, Evo Morales.



BLOG

Capital Report

Marc Ambinder and company deliver fresh analysis, the day's best links, and regular video dispatches at the new politics.theatlantic.com.



VIDEO

Climbing the Ladder?

James Fallows and Megan McArdle debate China's industrial future—and explain why you can't name a single Chinese brand.



RECIPES

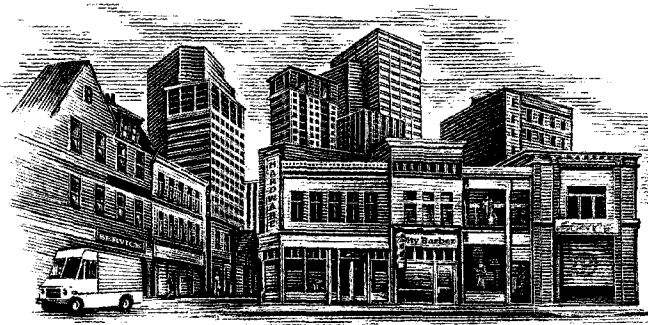
Behind the Bar

Wayne Curtis reveals how to bring historic cocktails back to life, with the help of some exotic—and newly available—ingredients.

REUTERS/CORBIS

THE WAY FORWARD > > >

JPMORGAN CHASE & Co.



OUR BUSINESS IS LENDING. OVER \$100 BILLION IN THE FOURTH QUARTER ALONE.

Are banks lending? At JPMorgan Chase the answer is yes. We are extending credit at a healthy rate, over \$100 billion in the fourth quarter of 2008.

We know that lending plays a vital role in the strength and ultimate recovery of our economy. As we have seen in the past, it's bad for the economy for banks to make loans that customers cannot repay. Banks must adhere to safe and sound lending standards, and borrowers need to be mindful of their ability to repay.

In tough economic times, demand for loans decreases as borrowers get more cautious. As a result, overall lending often does decline.

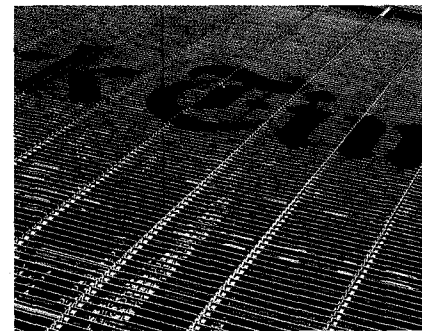
But we continue to make loans every day.

In the fourth quarter, we extended more than 5 million new consumer loans and lines of credit across cards, mortgages, home equity, auto, and education finance. We also lent billions to small and mid-size businesses, municipalities, and nonprofits. These funds will help them create jobs, fund medical research, and improve social services and job training.

Lending is our business, but it comes with a duty to lend responsibly. We continue to meet the needs of creditworthy borrowers in a safe way, helping to strengthen our economy and move it forward.

**For more specifics on JPMorgan Chase and The Way Forward
visit jpmorganchase.com/thewayforward**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

"The Founders' Great Mistake" (January/February *Atlantic*) was, according to Garrett Epps, the design of the office of the president. In particular, Epps cites the inconvenience of the long lag between Election Day and Inauguration Day and, even more important, the difficulties in ending the tenure of a president who has lost the confidence of the voters. He notes that parliamentary systems do not suffer the long interregnum, but he does not mention that parliamentary systems can end the tenure of a renegade prime minister quite quickly through a vote of no confidence. Nor does he mention that parliamentary systems have a distinct advantage in keeping the functions of the head of state and the head of government separate. Combining both functions in a single person, as in the U.S., is another oft-cited dubious feature of the office of the president.

Isn't it worth discussing the option of adopting a parliamentary system for the U.S.?

ROBERT W. RAYNSFORD, PH.D.
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF THE ARMY (RET.)
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Garrett Epps makes important and interesting points about the inadequacies of the Constitution's setup of the presidency, and persuasively argues that reform is necessary. On the issue

of President Bush, however, it seems to me Epps gives Congress too light a treatment. Certainly by 2006, it was clear that we had what he calls a "run-

Log

Readers responding to Garrett Epps's January/February article on amending the presidency proposed a number of additional ways to check presidential power:

- **Hold a Constitutional Convention open to the public.**
- **Grant a presidential line-item veto.**
- **Require the president to defend his policies in open public debate.**
- **Elect Cabinet members.**
- **Allow for a vote of no confidence.**
- **Amend the American people.**

away president," and that Congress was specifically elected to rein him in. It failed to do so on issue after issue, despite its appropriations power. In this case, the Constitution provided more than enough ammunition for Congress to step in, but the legislature repeatedly backed down from the president's games of chicken.

The specter of President Clinton's victory over a truculent Congress in the mid-'90s may have scared legislators, except this time most of the country was hoping that Congress would, indeed, stop a man run wild. The failure to do so was theirs, not the Constitution's or the Founding Fathers'.

GIDON ROTHSTEIN
BRONX, N.Y.

Garrett Epps offers a provocative argument. Still, while it is probably true that the executive branch received relatively little attention at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, the potentially monarchical character of the presidency got a great deal of attention and criticism in the wider public debate on the Constitution, notably in the writings of those known as the Anti-Federalists. Further, Epps overemphasizes the role of Alexander Hamilton in establishing

an authoritative executive. Hamilton did make a forceful and influential case for implied powers, but in application the concept of implied powers did more to strengthen Congress relative to the states than to strengthen the president relative to Congress. Finally, the emergence of what Arthur Schlesinger called "the imperial presidency" was less a matter of constitutional design than of historical pressure. Specifically, two world wars and a Cold War and the development of the United States as an activist state at home and a global empire abroad pushed power toward a single decisive center.

That so many Americans now look to Barack Obama, not Congress, to save us from the consequences of George Bush's bad decisions suggests that the imperial presidency may be here to stay.

PROFESSOR CARL L. BANKSTON III
TULANE UNIVERSITY
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

IDENTITY CRISIS

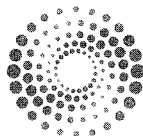
Hua Hsu's "The End of White America" (January/February *Atlantic*) is an entertaining essay on an important topic but gets the fundamental story upside down in claiming that "the culture is being remade in the image of white America's multiethnic, multicolored heirs." Hsu gets it wrong by focusing on cultural froth, like music, food, and clothes. The real story, at the deeper level, is how much and how quickly the children of immigrants from many continents come to adopt WASP culture—the Indian American who marries out of love, the Asian American who shucks modesty in pursuit of personal success, the Mexican American who finds Protestantism's path more fulfilling

STEVE BRODNER; FELIX SOCKWELL; ADRIAN GAUT/ART + COMMERCE

CERTAINTY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES.

In today's environment, businesses and professionals require just the right information at the right time. As the world's leading source of intelligent information, Thomson Reuters combines industry expertise and innovative technology to deliver accurate, trusted, must-have information. Information that provides you knowledge. Knowledge that gives you an edge. Knowledge to act.

FINANCIAL
LEGAL
TAX & ACCOUNTING
SCIENTIFIC
HEALTHCARE
MEDIA



THOMSON REUTERS
KNOWLEDGE TO ACT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



AFTER THE
MAYFLOWER
APRIL 13



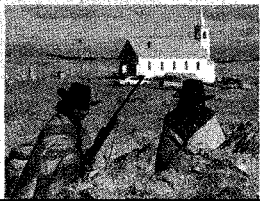
TECUMSEH'S
VISION
APRIL 20



TRAIL OF
TEARS
APRIL 27



GERONIMO
MAY 4



WOUNDED
KNEE
MAY 11

PBS AND
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE
PRESENT

**WE SHALL
REMAIN**

MONDAYS - 9PM ET
PT

Be more



PBS

than her mother's village Catholicism, and so on—like the Irish, Italians, and Jews before them. (African American descendants of slaves have been deeply American for generations.) The WASP culture that matters is not the culture of golf shoes and Lawrence Welk; it's the culture of personal expression and personal salvation, material achievement, voluntarism in social matters, and egalitarianism. It's roughly what Tocqueville described in 1836. And it doesn't matter whether this deeper culture is expressed in first-generation Frank Sinatra's "My Way" or a hip-hop-er's rap version of the same message.

CLAUDE S. FISCHER
BERKELEY, CALIF.

Hua Hsu hits on a number of important issues, but I believe that he overstates the plight of white America.

While sociologists like Matt Wray bemoan the lack of "white culture," I look at white America and see only further strength. Minority groups have to look inward to find their "culture" because they need to define themselves in some way. White Americans have a much easier time. The white American narrative is interwoven with the American narrative as a whole. White culture is America.

As an Indian American who attended an effete private boarding school, I have learned that to achieve a level of cultural assimilation that enables a minority to move up the ladders in society, one has to embrace the "Stuff White People Like." The peacoats, polos, Frisbee sports, and *Arrested Development* DVDs might seem like trivial favorites of the white elite, but they represent certain gateways that minorities have to navigate. My friends joke that I'm as white as they are, because I've essentially sold out to adhere to their cultural norms. But what choice does a student like myself have under

these circumstances? There may be no "white culture," but white people still dictate our societal norms. To become a cultural elite in America, one has to whiten him- or herself.

RYAN KARERAT
CLINTON, N.Y.

Hua Hsu replies:

I agree with Claude Fischer's most basic assumption that there are deeper narratives and value systems, often unnoticed, that determine our entry into and relationship with American culture. And I agree that even the most progressive expressions of American identity still invoke the logic of assimilation (though I find Fischer's classification of group characteristics rather rigid—perhaps this makes me an "immodest" Asian American).

Even if the "deeper culture" still maintains values like individualism or egalitarianism—values that aren't exclusively the property of the Anglo-Saxon world—I believe that the circulation of new images and ideas is still significant. It certainly feels that way for those young enough to appreciate the effects of something as fluid and formally radical as hip-hop. Now, whether P. Diddy, the choose-your-own-identity quality of Facebook, Dora

the Explorer, or Burning Man will result in discernible political change or a broader, spiritual realignment remains to be seen. But as we witnessed this past year, "froth" matters—it creates the conditions for change.

I agree, too, with Ryan Karerat's ultimate assertion that it is too soon to pronounce America "post-white." He offers a stirring personal example of the

pressures of assimilation at this strange moment, when there are still expressions of mainstream "whiteness" but "whiteness" itself has no discernible core. I am reminded of the commentary about Barack Obama's skill (and, more important, success) at "playing white." I am somewhat hopeful about all of this: the

**"There may be
no 'white culture,'
but white people
still dictate our
societal norms.
To become a
cultural elite
in America, one
has to whiten
him- or herself."**

PBS AND
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE
PRESENT

AMERICA THROUGH NATIVE EYES



WE SHALL REMAIN

MONDAYS STARTING APRIL 13 - 9PM ET
PT

logic of race and identity we've inherited no longer seems adequate. It is up to those who care about and are affected by this change to discover a new language and seek out new ideas befitting this moment.

IN DEFENSE OF PRINT

Michael Hirschorn's article "End Times" (January/February *Atlantic*), which speculates whether *The New York Times* can survive the death of journalism, leaves a lot to be desired.

The article refers to the paper's credit crisis. We disagree with that characterization. Here's our situation.

We have two revolving-credit agreements with banks that allow us to borrow up to \$400 million under each agreement, or \$800 million in total, whenever we need it. One of our agreements will expire in May 2009 and the other in June 2011. As we have said publicly on more than one occasion, because we believe we need significantly less than the total \$800 million available credit, we do not plan to replace the full \$400 million that is expiring in May. We have not already borrowed money against our building's value, as the article states. Rather, we are in the process of pursuing a sale-leaseback for up to \$225 million for some of the space we own in our headquarters building. While credit markets remain tight, we have been talking with lenders and, based on our conversations with them, we expect to get the financing to meet our obligations when they come due. And please remember, we continue to generate good cash flow from our operations.

With regard to the specific point made about the demise of the print edition of *The Times* in May, we have 830,000 loyal readers who have subscribed to *The New York Times* for more than two years, a number that has increased by about a third over the past decade.

CATHERINE MATHIS
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY

It seemed an all-too-facile argument to conclude that the demise of *The New York Times*—and, let's just say it, *The*

Wall Street Journal and *The Washington Post*—would not be a disaster. Michael Hirschorn points out that such a development would be a boon to the expanding Huffington Post and imitators to come, as well as "independent operators" like columnists Thomas Friedman and Paul Krugman. HuffPo may be expanding, but one has to wonder if its business model now or in the foreseeable future will ever provide the resources, and develop and hold the talent, that have distinguished the best of American journalism for generations. As for the "independent operators," lost in the analysis is the contribution of the backfield team of editors and design professionals who have had a critical and often unacknowledged stake in the careers of these "branded" news voices.

LARRY O'CONNOR
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Michael Hirschorn replies:

The analysis in my column was based on the New York Times Company's public statements. Catherine Mathis is correct that the Times Company was discussing, but had not yet begun, borrowing against the value of its Times Square headquarters when I wrote my article. Since then, however, The Times itself reported that the Times Company was close to a sale/lease arrangement with the investment firm W. P. Carey & Company that would amount to the same thing. I clearly jumped the gun. The information about revolving-credit agreements that Mathis refers to was announced on December 9—as it happens, the day my column went to press.

Given the subject matter, I will happily grant that this is, if nothing else, densely ironic. And I will also grant that these recently announced conditions may slow down the doomsday clock. However, numbers released by the New York Times Company since the piece went to press do not inspire confidence in the paper's

"HuffPo may be expanding, but will its business model ever develop and hold the talent that has distinguished the best of American journalism?"

long-term prospects. Advertising revenues dropped 17.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008 compared with the same period in 2007, and total revenues in Q4 were down 10 percent, though the paper continued to show a small profit overall.

In addition to the likely sale/lease deal, the company has sought cash injections elsewhere, as my column suggested it would. The Times Company has started looking for a buyer of its stake in the Boston Red Sox and has effectively borrowed \$250 million at the outrageous interest rate of 14 percent from the Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim. These moves will delay

the day of reckoning, but they have the feel of burning the furniture to heat the building. And given the steepening decline of the overall economy, and broader shifts brought on by digital media, there is little reason to believe this pressure will end anytime soon. At some point, unless the Times Company moves very quickly, it will run out of furniture.

A SOURCE OF HOPE

Christopher Hitchens may find "null emptiness" in the phrase *audacity of hope* ("Cool Cat," January/February *Atlantic*). I had a different reaction to those words when I recently read them in a chapter from a wonderful book first published in 1962, titled *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America*, by Lerone Bennett Jr.

Bennett wrote a moving passage:

The slaves ... transcended their environment, creating a new structure of meaning and putting their oppressors and the world in their debt. And no one can read the record of that transcendence without a sense of awe at the audacity of the slaves' hope.

Perhaps in this way, it is easier to place those words into a meaningful context.

WILLIAM MORTON
WESTFORD, MASS.

QUICK STUDY

LAW

Blaming the Brain

Could neuroscience excuse violent criminals? Most states don't consider "impulsive aggression" a viable defense, holding that a sudden urge to act violently doesn't interfere with the ability to understand right and wrong. But new brain research may compel courts to distinguish between an "impulse that was irresistible" and an "impulse not resisted." This could undermine standards of criminal autonomy, force judges to evaluate science they don't understand, and "unravel the fabric of the criminal justice system."

—*"Without Thinking: Impulsive Aggression and Criminal Responsibility," Behavioral Sciences and the Law*

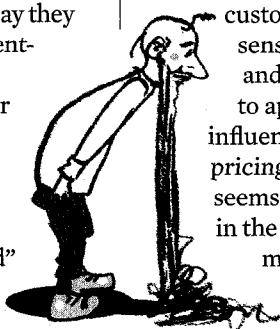


RELIGION

Beards of Iniquity

Although Brigham Young wore a beard, today's Mormon leaders insist that a clean-shaven face shows piety and obedience. But some bearded Mormons are resisting: they say they feel shame and resentment when told to shave, because their beards express "deeply felt, even intimate, identities." Appearance is a "highly charged" marker of loyalty in the church, and growing a beard is increasingly becoming "a serious breach that sets in play a uniquely Mormon social drama."

—*"Men's Grooming in the Latter-Day Saints Church: A Qualitative Study of Norm Violation," Mental Health, Religion & Culture*



ECONOMICS

Price of Freedom

Given the option to name any price for a lunch buffet, a movie, and a hot drink, consumers paid an average of 86 percent of the regular prices, and never chose to pay nothing. Although the

customers said a sense of fairness and a desire not to appear cheap influenced their pricing, the scheme seems to work even in the anonymous market of the Internet.

When Radiohead let fans name their price for downloads of a 2007 album, the band earned more money than from downloads of all its previous albums combined.

—*"Pay What You Want: A New Participative Pricing Mechanism," Journal of Marketing*

SOCIETY

Winner's Remorse

Winning the lottery leads not to instant gratification, but to almost three years of mental strain and angst. Receiving a windfall of cash causes cognitive dissonance that is alleviated only when the tainted money comes to feel as deserved as earned income.

—*"Delay and Deservingness After Winning the Lottery," University of Zurich*

PSYCHOLOGY

Memory Holes

Lots of people rolled their eyes when Scooter Libby claimed he didn't remember outing a CIA officer to the press in 2003. But his story isn't far-fetched: when the brain recognizes that a piece of information is significant, it will encode and organize it in ways that promote long-term memory. But if its full importance is

clear only down the road—say, in testimony before a jury—accurate retrieval is much less likely.

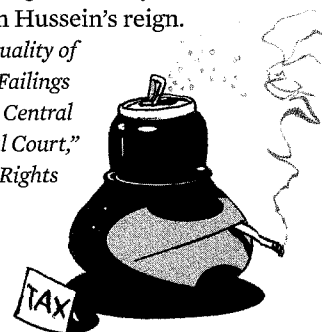
—*"Misconceptions of Memory: The Scooter Libby Effect," Psychological Science*

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Rough Justice

Iraq's Central Criminal Court is completely overwhelmed and failing to meet even minimum standards of justice. A handful of judges are trying thousands of cases—on offenses like terrorism, corruption, and sectarian violence—and suspects can be locked up for years before a hearing. Some children share cells with adults, prisoner abuse is common, defense lawyers are usually worthless, and the whole thing shows a "disturbing continuity" with Saddam Hussein's reign.

—*"The Quality of Justice: Failings of Iraq's Central Criminal Court," Human Rights Watch*



GOVERNANCE

The Fat Tax

Can taxes on soft drinks reduce our horrible rates of obesity? Not by much. The average soda tax of 3 percent does almost nothing to curb weight gain. And while heavy "sin taxes" on cigarettes have decreased consumption, taxing soda at a tobacco-like 55 percent would reduce the overweight or obese population by less than 0.7 percent.

—*"Can Soft Drink Taxes Reduce Population Weight?," Emory University*

Who cares if you're there yet?



With the Tribeca, all the fun is in getting there. An available third row ensures plenty of seating, while the Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive gives you a firm grip on the road. And since it's a 2008 IIHS Top Safety Pick,* you get peace of mind as well. Family and the open road go together better than you thought. **Love. It's what makes a Subaru, a Subaru.**



DISPATCHES

DISASTER T. C. Boyle describes life in Santa Barbara after the flames, if not the fear.

RELIGION Andrew Gumbel on trust-fund polygamists

SPORT Stefan Fatsis explains the coming exodus of teenage basketball stars to Europe.

HIGHER EDUCATION Joshua Green enrolls in Dope Dealing 101.

LATIN AMERICA Eliza Barclay on the home-grown enemies of Bolivia's Evo Morales

DRINK Wayne Curtis discovers gin's missing link, and other wonders once lost to history.

TRAVEL Trevor Corson finds solitude, and lots of naked people, in Europe's northern extremity.

TECHNOLOGY Josh Levin on lizards, porn, and football—now available in three dimensions



EVAN ABRAMSON

In Bolivia, the backlash against race-based populism may be under way.



DISASTER

Smoke Gets In Your Eyes

POST-FIRE LIFE IN SANTA BARBARA WILL NEVER BE THE SAME—OR WILL IT?

By T. C. Boyle

I AM STILL not prepared. I am resolutely not prepared. And while I know that material things are a drag on the soul and that you can't take them with you (Tutankhamen tried, and look what happened to him), I can't imagine the kind of triage an evacuation would involve. Which vital papers to sacrifice, which to preserve? What about bank accounts, insurance policies, the 50 boxes of my archive, the deer antler I found in my boyhood woods, the first record I ever bought (Stan Getz, *Jazz Samba*)? Not to mention the immovables, like this house in which I am now sitting, a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and constructed entirely of redwood 100 years ago. If it came to it, I could probably induce my wife to get into the car, my children, certainly the dog, but not the cat. The cat, I'm afraid, would do what cats do—hide—and that hiding would be the end of her.

When the Tea Fire hit Santa Barbara at dusk on the clear, unseasonably

warm evening of Thursday, the 13th of November, we were, like everyone else, busy living our lives. Two friends had just flown in from Chicago, complaining of gloom and wet, and we were celebrating their arrival. We'd walked down to the Cafe del Sol, on the lagoon that overlooks the ocean, to sit out on the deck, drink margaritas, and enjoy temperatures in the 80s while reveling in the contrast with the dreary, benighted Midwest. Walking back along the beach, we barely noticed the winds, which had begun to rock the palms and eucalyptus but not in a particularly alarming way, not in the way of the arid Santa Ana winds (or as we call them here, Sundowners) that seasonally rake the hills and steal the humidity from the air and the moisture from the chaparral.

At home, we went about our business—that is, celebrating—over dinner and wine, and all of that was very usual and fine, until the telephone rang. It was a friend of my son's calling to say that a fire had broken out on the ridge above us. In the next moment we were out on the lawn, looking to the darkened mountains that frame the city, and there it was, in deadly earnest. The Chicagoans—damp no longer—were soon scuttling around and providing essential assistance as the power went out like a fist slamming down and I ascended to the roof with the poor pathetic little strand of a garden hose in hand.

That night we were very lucky, but our luck, which depended on a change of the wind, proved devastating for those families and individuals to the west of us, who lost everything when 231 houses burned. Once the danger had passed—for us, at least—we went down to the waterfront to see what we could see, and there the smoke was overwhelming. The glazed sea washing behind us, we looked up at the hills of Santa Barbara's Riviera neighborhood as the fire climbed and jumped with the winds, now gusting like the draft of an infinite woodstove. Palm trees exploded like rockets. Houses went hollow-eyed as the flames chewed through the windows. The winds shifted and shifted again, now blowing ash in our faces, now pushing west and then north into the blackness. Helicopters, manned heroically by pilots wearing night-vision goggles, swarmed and swooped, dropping their loads even as fire companies from all over the region gathered to fight the inferno on the ground. We went directly home—fled, flew—and I dragged out the garden hose all over again. All night, sleepless, I awaited the evacuation call.

Earlier in the year, in reaction to the Zaca Mesa blaze, which burned north of Santa Barbara for two months in the summer of 2007, I'd written a short story called "Ash Monday," about our vulnerability in the face of natural

LISA VANDER MEULEN/CORBIS

forces. I was, of course, whistling by the graveyard, trying to allay my own fears—or at least address them. In the story, a disaffected 12-year-old boy seems, in the reader's mind, the motive force for the catastrophe to come, but it doesn't work out that way at all. The fire is started by accident, by an innocuous human activity, by a woman who had no thought of it. So, too, the Tea Fire—named for a garden structure on a deserted estate few of us had heard of—was started by human activity. The night before, a group of young men and women—celebrating, as we all celebrate—had sat around a bonfire there, and the bonfire had died down to coals by the time they left in the waning hours of the night. But then the winds came and breathed on the coals, and the coals came back to life.

Just like the fire next time. ▀

T. C. Boyle's latest novel is The Women.

RELIGION

Prophet Without Honor

AMONG THE POLYGAMISTS IN HILDALE AND COLORADO CITY
By Andrew Gumbel

FOUR YEARS AGO, when Bruce Wisan first started traveling to the twin cities of Hildale and Colorado City, a remote fundamentalist Mormon community on the border of Utah and Arizona where polygamy is openly practiced, people shunned him in the rutted, unpaved streets. They called him an instrument of Satan. He couldn't even persuade the local café to serve him lunch.

The residents had reason to be suspicious. Wisan was appointed by a Utah state court to safeguard and manage the fundamentalist Mormon trust that has administered 85 percent of the property in the twin cities since 1942. His immediate predecessor was Warren Jeffs, the community's notoriously authoritarian "Prophet," who was convicted as an accomplice to rape

for arranging the marriage of a 14-year-old girl. (Jeffs has multiple wives himself, and still faces charges in Arizona and Texas.)

Wisan's job was to clean up the mess Jeffs left behind. As Wisan told me, the prophet had stopped defending the trust from two lawsuits (later settled) and was possibly mismanaging its assets. Jeffs was also known for splitting wives from husbands, "reassigning" families to suit his whims, expelling dozens of men who challenged his authority, and transferring houses at will (practices he surreptitiously continued after Wisan arrived). To compound the confusion, before his arrest, Jeffs had orchestrated a stealthy exodus of select followers to a new compound in Texas. Even the most open, honest attempt to figure out who deserved to live where could bog down in dizzying complication.

For Wisan, a 62-year-old accountant from Salt Lake City with just one marriage to his name, the assignment was pure culture shock. "It's a foreign country here," he told me. "They have their own language, their own dress, their own police."

In a sense, Wisan had to play prophet himself—albeit a prophet with a seven-member advisory board. One of his goals was to dissolve the trust and give individuals the right to own their own homes. That goal, though, assumed a degree of cooperation that the fundamentalists have only sporadically given him. "I don't feel protected by

Mr. Wisan's management," one church member wrote online recently. "I feel exploited!"

That defiance started to crumble when Wisan threatened a judiciously chosen few families with eviction if they did not pay their property taxes, and they buckled to his authority.

Everything changed again, though, in the wake of last April's police raid on the community in Texas, and the temporary transfer of more than 400 children into state custody.

An enraged church leadership switched to a new policy of out-and-out confrontation, and began suing to block Wisan's every move. In the past few months, many of the Texas families have returned, determined to regain their old houses—and provoking feuds with the occupants. Church members' tax bills have gone unpaid for months.

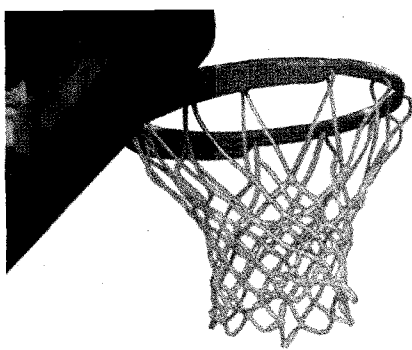
For now, both sides are in a court-ordered "stand-down," the civil equivalent of a temporary cease-fire, but hostility seethes just beneath the surface, and the comprehensive settlement Wisan has sought since he arrived still looks elusive. The church's aim, Wisan says, is to reclaim its land just as surely as it reclaimed its children in Texas. "They characterize the situation as me against them, but they are the biggest portion of my constituents," Wisan insisted. "I represent them; they just don't want me to." ▀

Andrew Gumbel is a freelance writer based in Los Angeles.



Church members arrive at a Texas child-custody hearing last April.

BOB DAEMMICH/CORBIS



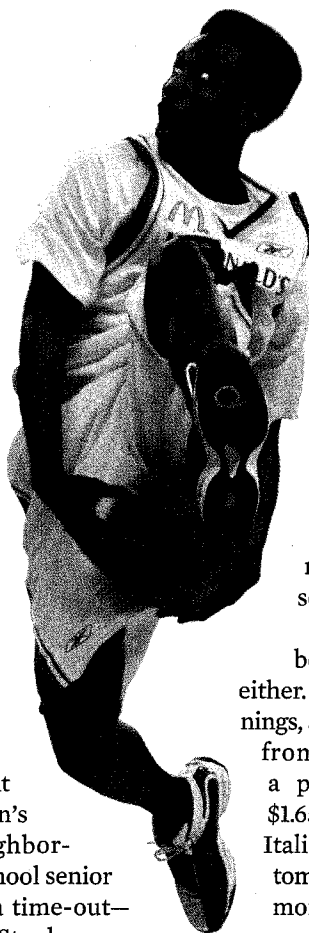
SPORT Million Dollar Babies

SHOULD TOP
BASKETBALL
PROSPECTS GO TO
COLLEGE? SHOULD
THEY EVEN GO TO
HIGH SCHOOL?

By Stefan Fatsis

LANCE STEPHENSON'S NICKNAME is "Born Ready"—as in, ready for the NBA. But on a winter night in a tiny gym in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, the 6-foot-5 high-school senior mostly looked ready for a time-out—of the preschool variety. Stephenson slumped when teammates failed to pass him the ball, shook his head in disgust when they missed shots, jogged back lazily on defense, and whined about fouls. Stephenson's other nickname is "Sir Lance-a-lot," but he seldom looked heroic, and seemed to be doing little to lead his team, three-time defending New York City public-school champion Abraham Lincoln, as it beat host Paul Robeson, 81-72.

Then the final statistics arrived: 38 points and 14 rebounds, including 17 of Lincoln's deficit-erasing 27 fourth-quarter points. During an after-school practice the next day, Lincoln's coach, Dwayne "Tiny" Morton, said the performance highlighted Stephenson's main flaws: impatience and thoughtlessness. Still, Morton was unwavering on the question of ability. I asked how many players he'd seen in his 14 years as a coach at Lincoln who were ready for the NBA, born or otherwise. "Two," he replied. "Sebastian and Lance."



Brandon Jennings jumped to Europe last year. Younger teens may follow.

Sebastian is Sebastian Telfair, a whippet 5-foot-11 point guard who, in the spring of 2004, landed a *Sports Illustrated* cover and became one of a record eight high-school seniors chosen in the first round of the NBA draft. That won't be Stephenson's destiny, because the NBA has since banned the leap from prom to pro, requiring draft-eligible players to be at least one year removed from their high-school graduating class.

But college might not be Stephenson's next stop, either. A year ago, Brandon Jennings, a high-school point guard from Los Angeles, signed a pioneering three-year, \$1.65 million contract with the Italian professional club Lottomatica Virtus Roma. A few months later, he received a reported \$2 million deal with the apparel company Under Armour. Since his signing, scouts for European teams have begun attending high-school games in the U.S., and Under Armour has been sending free sneakers to Stephenson and other potential high-school exports.

In Rome, Jennings is getting a chance to build up more than his bank account. Elite teams in Europe's top leagues—in Italy, Spain, Russia, Greece—are considered a notch below the NBA but a full cut above the NCAA's best. The players are grown men, many of them veterans of top U.S. college programs and the NBA. Coaches are hardened tacticians, practices are grueling, and systems of play are complex. Games are more physical than in the NCAA, and seasons are twice as long. NBA scouts pack top contests. "In Europe, they don't baby you," said Sonny Vaccaro, who brokered Jennings's tryout and signing. "You get beat up, sworn at, kicked out of practice. If your character can hold up, you win."

Vaccaro has been an executive at Nike, Adidas, and Reebok, and he helped make the recruiting and marketing of young players a big business in the past three decades. These days, though, he is crusading against what he considers the NCAA's phony amateurism and the NBA's misguided rulemaking. Qualified players, he told me, should be able to earn a good salary playing basketball when they want to, not when the NCAA or NBA decides they can. Over the past year, the families of several high-school seniors have contacted Vaccaro about the European option, he said, and he has identified eight underclassmen, some as young as freshmen, "who are interested when the time comes." This year or next year, Vaccaro predicted, a player will turn pro and head to Europe after his junior year of high school.

If that seems like one more sign of the basketball apocalypse, consider that many of the Europeans who populate NBA rosters began playing professionally as young as 14. In any case, Vaccaro believes Europe should be a destination only for exceptionally talented and relatively mature players. And Jennings has cautioned that his Italian sojourn hasn't been one big scoop of gelato: "I don't want anyone coming over here thinking it's easy," he wrote on his Under Armour blog.

Once the basketball machine gets rolling, though, it can be hard to stop. Jennings is expected to opt out of his contract with Lottomatica after this season and enter the NBA draft in June. If he's a high pick, adolescent interest in playing abroad may rise rapidly.

On the court after practice, Stephenson's father, Lance Sr., said Kansas, Southern Cal, and St. John's were recruiting his son. But if he fails to become NCAA-eligible—a legitimate concern, according to people around him—his options will change. No one I talked to seemed confident that Stephenson was emotionally prepared for the professional grind on the Continent. But with the door open, nothing can stop him from dribbling through it, ready or not. "I think he'd be a better pro right now than a college player," his father said. "Going overseas, it's not out of the question." ■

Stefan Fatsis is the author of *A Few Seconds of Panic and Word Freak*.

TOM HAUCK/ICON SM/CORBIS

HIGHER EDUCATION

Cannabusiness

ASSEMBLING A HYDRO HUT,
BUYING A GUN SAFE, CLEANING
UP AFTER NEIGHBORHOOD
DOGS—THE ABC'S OF OPENING
A POT FRANCHISE

By Joshua Green

UNDER A MICROSCOPE, it's easy to tell really good marijuana from schwag. Look for trichomes. On the best pot, they cluster, thick and crystalline, indicators of potency. If you're training to become a professional pot dealer, as I was last fall, it's important to be able to pick out the good stuff. Your livelihood will depend on it. Fortunately, I had expert instruction, along with strains of varying quality to examine for my pedagogical benefit. Ranked from best to worst, they were Blueberry, Grand Daddy Purple, and Mango. Appraising them was, truth be told, slightly nerve-racking, since the assignment was sprung as a sort of pop quiz. It was part of an advanced seminar on growing and selling marijuana in which I had enrolled at the Los Angeles campus of Oaksterdam University, a new trade school founded in Oakland and devoted to the booming business of growing and dispensing medical marijuana. Or, as we liked to call it around campus, "cannabusiness."

In 1996, California voters passed Proposition 215, a referendum legalizing medical marijuana. Although federal law prohibits the cultivation, sale, or use of cannabis, a series of subsequent state laws and court decisions cleared the way for what has become a thriving industry. Recent studies say that Californians grow more than 20 million pot plants. Their bounty, valued at as much as \$14 billion, is distributed to the state's 200,000 physician-certified users through hundreds of dispensaries, which advertise through billboards, flyers, and even bikini-clad barkers on Venice Beach. Given California's well-publicized budget crunch, it's worth noting that legal pot sales generate \$100 million in state tax revenue a year. As Don Duncan, the proprietor of dispensaries in Berkeley and Hollywood and an Oaksterdam professor, put it, "Marijuana has evolved from a counter-

cultural experience to an over-the-counter experience."

A veteran pot activist named Richard Lee founded Oaksterdam in 2007 to serve this new and lucrative trade and add a veneer of respectability to an industry operating in a legal gray area. (The feds have adopted a mostly hands-off policy, though they occasionally swoop in to make an example-setting arrest, like that of the comedian and stoner icon Tommy Chong, in 2003, for running a head shop.) State law requires no formal training to operate a dispensary, so an Oaksterdam degree is more showpiece than necessity.

My introductory class had consisted of two sessions. The first taught the legal and business aspects of running a dispensary and, because the faculty is active in the cannabusiness, emphasized such practical concerns as not getting robbed (keep your stash in a gun safe) and not getting busted (*exude* good corporate citizenship—incorporate, pay your taxes, join the Chamber of Commerce; Duncan won over suspicious neighbors by cleaning up all the dog poop on the block). Learn your bud: what's good, what's bad. Carry a variety of strains, at different price points. Know their effects. For instance, you'll need to explain to customers that *sativas* produce a clear, heady high, while *indicas* cause a drowsier, full-bodied kind of lift (and munchies). You'll want to sample everything.

The second session was Grow Lab, taught by a reed-thin young man in a kimono shirt, who introduced himself as Joey the Horticulturalist. State law allows patients and caregivers to grow 12 plants, but some localities set higher limits (Oakland, for instance, allows 72), so if you prefer to do without external suppliers, you can grow your own. Joey had assembled a nylon "Hydro Hut," with lights, ventilator fans, and a grow table—your basic beginner setup. While explaining how everything fit together and how we would plant, grow, and harvest a crop as a class project, Joey effortlessly fielded

a series of increasingly technical questions, earning respectful nods. For raw botanical skills, Martha Stewart can't hold a candle to Joey.

The vibe at Oaksterdam was friendly, but without quite encouraging intermingling. I struck up a conversation with the guy behind me. Balding and bearded, with a ponytail and a tie-dyed shirt, he looked to be about 60 and introduced himself simply as "Hawkeye." Hawkeye had ambitions to be a large-scale commercial grower—not strictly legal, although I did not sense concern. Yet he was the only cliché-worthy specimen

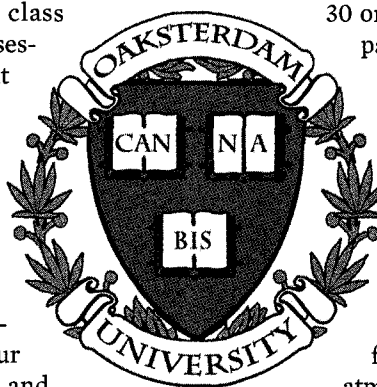
I encountered at pot school. My 30 or so classmates encompassed every age, gender, and ethnicity; paid careful attention; and asked pointed, intelligent questions. Save for perhaps a slight overrepresentation of piercings and tattoos, nothing indicated an unusual field of study. The atmosphere of purposeful

endeavor was like what you might find at a night-school business class of aspiring franchisees.

This is fitting, because Oaksterdam has big ambitions. Richard Lee hinted at them when he founded the school, by creating a seal, or, more accurately, remodeling one—Harvard's, actually, the Latin *VERITAS* replaced by *CANNABIS* and the oak clusters swapped for marijuana leaves. Like the great universities, Oaksterdam seeks to imbue its students with a vision of the world and the zeal to go forth and change it. As Ilia Gvozdenovic, Oaksterdam's sallow, 20-something chancellor, explained, the aim is to mold a generation not just of pot dealers but of pot *idealists*, comrades in the struggle against federal persecution. So, really, Oaksterdam is less like Harvard and more like the University of Chicago, only with the complaint against government intervention in the market confining itself specifically to the market for cannabinoids.

Not convinced? You need to think with an open mind. And I can help you there—I'm a trained professional. ■

Joshua Green is an Atlantic senior editor.





Are dog days ahead for Bolivia's president?

LATIN AMERICA

The Mugabe of the Andes?

WHY PRESIDENT EVO MORALES'S RACIAL POLITICS IN BOLIVIA MAY BACKFIRE
By Eliza Barclay

AT FIRST GLANCE, Plan 3000, a satellite shantytown outside Santa Cruz, Bolivia's largest city, does not scream opportunity. Its unpaved main road, faintly lit by the erratic electricity, is cratered with caramel-colored puddles, and a stench from open sewers hangs in the humid air. But standing next to his tropical-fruit-juice cart, William Martinez, an indigenous Bolivian with a thatch of black hair and broad shoulders, says it offers more promise than his hometown of La Paz. The administrative capital and its most famous resident, President Evo Morales, Martinez says, seem increasingly distant and out of touch. "The president has resentment toward the middle class, the mestizos," Martinez told me. "Instead

of governing for a whole country, he is governing only for the indigenous class and has brought racism with him ... We don't want to march [with him], we want to work."

Since his landslide win in 2005, Morales has championed the country's indigenous majority (some 55 percent of the population), particularly his own Aymara group, which suffered discrimination and lacked political clout for centuries. But as he has consolidated power among the patchwork of indigenous groups in the western highlands, Morales has deployed a rhetoric studded with racial references aimed at his opposition, which is led by wealthy, mostly white businessmen and concentrated in the lowland eastern region that includes Santa Cruz. "He had the chance to be the Mandela of Bolivia, but instead he chose to be the Mugabe," said Luis Eduardo Siles, a columnist and former congressman in La Paz sympathetic to the opposition. "He has renewed ethnic divisions as an ingredient of his political success."

As the various factions of the opposition and Morales tussled over his

economic policies and constitutional reforms, the country split along clear geographical and class lines and murkier racial ones. In September, tensions crackled into violent protests, including one incident in which 30 people died. But Morales has prevailed, at least on paper: on January 25, Bolivians ratified a new constitution that grants autonomy and seats in its congress to the country's 36 indigenous groups. The final results showed 61 percent of a record turnout voting yes.

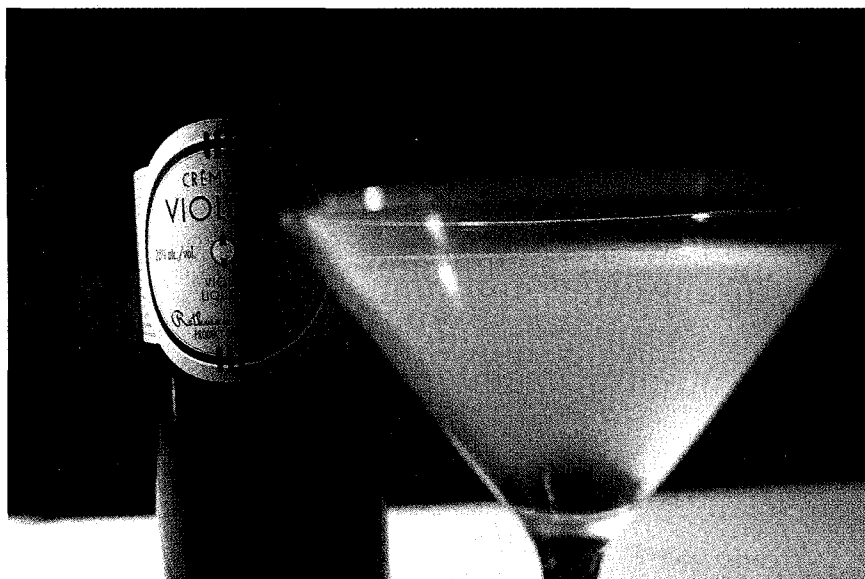
Still, Morales's racially charged approach may be losing its appeal. Martinez and other indigenous citizens in Santa Cruz and La Paz say they are growing weary of the calls and threats from Morales's Movement Toward Socialism, or MAS, party. One community leader near La Paz said MAS representatives threatened her constituents with fines if they did not join a march in October to support constitutional reforms.

As onetime backers have begun to criticize the president's tactics, the list of his political enemies has expanded beyond the Santa Cruz "elite." Felipe Quispe, a militant Aymara political leader who has questioned Morales's own indigenous identity, vociferously opposed the constitutional reforms. Savina Cuéllar, the indigenous prefect of the Chuquisaca region, also recently split with Morales. More generally, argues Miguel Centellas, a blogger and political scientist at Mount St. Mary's University, Morales's support among middle-class leftists is beginning to decline, in part for economic reasons.

Although the lowlands have prospered from farming and natural gas, the highland regions remain stuck in a poverty trap that Morales has shown little flair for unlocking. When he expelled the U.S. ambassador and the Drug Enforcement Administration in late 2008, he killed a trade agreement with the United States that was one of the few lifelines for Bolivia's exports. Depressed oil and gas prices have since meant less revenue for Bolivia, and less support from Morales's chief mentor and benefactor, Venezuela's Hugo Chávez. The only growth industry, in fact, appears to be coca. ■

Eliza Barclay is a freelance writer in Washington, D.C.

EVAN ABRAMSON



Elixirs like the Aviation will complicate your life. Gloriously.

DRINK

Spirits of the Dead

THE SUBTLE ART OF REVIVING LONG-DECEASED COCKTAILS

By Wayne Curtis

LAST YEAR AT Tales of the Cocktail, a large convention held each summer in New Orleans, the bartender Jamie Boudreau of Seattle began a presentation with a slide that read, “That Damn Eric Seed!” This seemed a little random. But Boudreau, an accomplished maker of obscure and antique cocktail ingredients, explained that he was a little aggravated with Seed for making some long-lost historic spirits commercially available, but not others, and generally complicating the cocktail enthusiast’s delicate ecosystem, which is now coping with the equivalent of an invasive species and accelerated evolution all at once.

Eric Seed doesn’t seem like someone who would intentionally disrupt anyone’s world. He’s a soft-spoken 39-year-old who, four years ago, founded a company called Haus Alpenz, which imports liquors that are difficult to find unless you travel great distances abroad or have a time machine. The first product Seed imported was a pine-flavored liqueur he got in the Austrian Alps and sold to upmarket bars in Colorado ski country. He has since added an Austrian walnut liqueur, two

apricot-based spirits, and a French vermouth made precisely as it was in 1821. Sometimes importing is not enough—if he detects demand for a lost ingredient among cocktail aficionados but discovers the original is available only in a debased form, he’ll commission distillers to re-create it from old recipes, using improved ingredients and processes. That’s what he did with pimento dram, a Jamaican allspice liqueur that had been unavailable in the United States for years but is now made for him in Europe. It’s proved especially popular in exotic cocktails (also called “tiki drinks”), including the vastly rewarding Nui Nui.

I met Seed for cocktails and dinner one night last fall. He talks about himself only reluctantly, but he’s far more voluble when talking about what’s in his bottles, and how history and fickle trade patterns have influenced what we drink. Seed is the only person I’ve heard use the phrase *Hanseatic League* since I was in high school. That came up in a discussion of his Batavia Arrack, a pleasantly musty spirit distilled from sugarcane and red rice on the island of Java. It first appeared in the U.S. around the time the Dutch and the English were tussling over Manhattan, but it had been largely

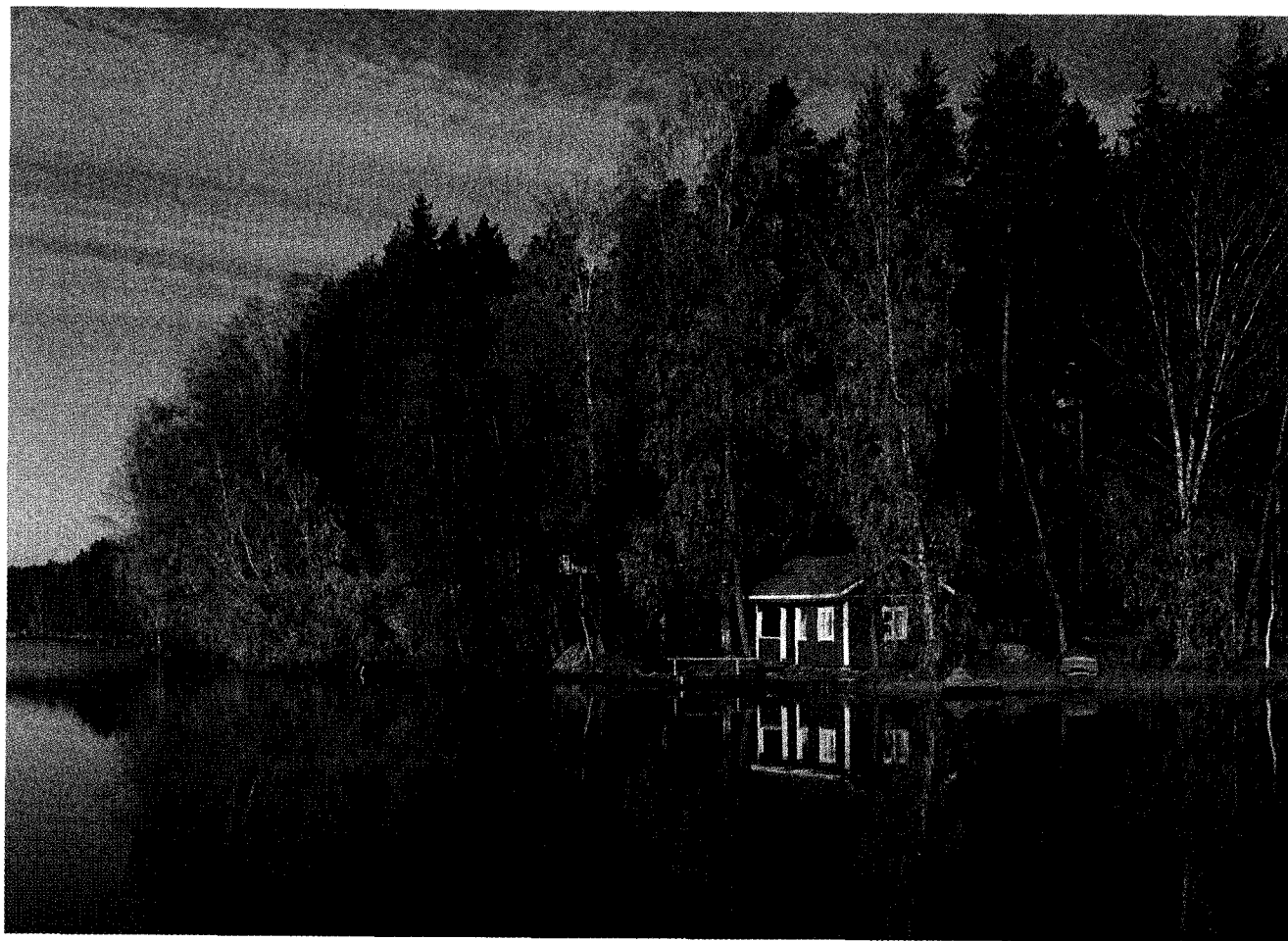
unavailable since Prohibition. Arrack is aromatic, with a roguish sensibility, and it’s often called for in 19th-century punch recipes. It’s also the base spirit of something called Swedish Punsch, a smoky liqueur used in vintage cocktails like the Doctor and the Diki-Diki.

Seed and I also sampled his Hayman’s Old Tom Gin, which some cocktail historians consider “the missing link”—the bridge between the sweeter Holland gin that launched the gin craze in the 18th century and the London Dry that typically goes in your martini today. Old Tom is sweeter and more robust than London Dry—“more botanically intense,” Seed says—and it avoids the angular, medicinal aftertaste.

One of Seed’s top sellers surprised me: Crème de Violette. This is an ethereal lavender-hued liqueur, with the fleeting, elusive taste and aroma of spring violets, from which it’s made. When it comes to drink, Americans rarely clamor for subtlety, but the demand for violet liqueur suggests that the home bar may be following the trajectory of the kitchen pantry. “There’s a growing sophistication in drink as there has been with food,” Seed says. Shelf space becomes scarcer, the invasive species begin to assert themselves, and cocktail life becomes more confounding.

The demand may also be driven by a latent curiosity about the celebrated Aviation cocktail, which first cropped up around 1916, at the dawn of the age of flight. The original recipe called for a touch of violet, but when the liqueur became impossible to procure, it was dropped from published recipes, and the Aviation became simply gin, lemon juice, and maraschino liqueur, with no hint of the azure sky that inspired it. But now it’s back, and getting attention in some tony precincts. I enjoyed one recently at Arnaud’s French 75 in New Orleans, a comfortably dusky bar of dark wood, quarter-size hexagonal floor tiles, and Edith Piaf in the background. On the first sip it was a bright, refreshing elixir that recalled a spring evening, lifting me gently out of the confines of place. By the second sip I was vowing to add Crème de Violette to my inventory. And by the third I was damning Eric Seed for complicating my life. ■

Wayne Curtis is an Atlantic correspondent.



The Finnish idea of a perfect vacation: a mökki on the shore of a quiet lake

TRAVEL

Simplify, Simplify

IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF FINLAND, SOLITUDE IS A NATIONAL PASTIME.

By Trevor Corson

IN THE FARTHEST corner of northern Europe, tucked between a remote finger of the Baltic Sea and Russia's frigid port of Murmansk, lies Finland. In North America, this latitude can land you in igloo territory. But when I touched down in the capital of Helsinki, Finland felt familiar—in fact, it felt a lot like Maine, where I spent my childhood summers.

Finland possesses a few features that Maine does not—for starters, a vast number of steamy wooden rooms full of naked people. But apart from the saunas, the similarities are striking: Finland has the same flat landscape, the same crisp air, the countless lakes, the fir trees and birches, and the fragrant wildflowers. Like Maine, Finland has a

convoluted coastline dotted with rocky islands, and Finns even celebrate summer with lobster dinners—or rather, raucous evenings spent obliterating bucketfuls of crayfish. I was already feeling right at home when I met several Finns who revealed that they, just like my grandparents in Maine, owned a vacation cottage in the woods.

My new Finnish friends explained that staying at a cottage—called a *mökki* in Finnish—is basically Finland's national pastime. Nearly half a million *mökki* dot the countryside, and that comes to roughly one cottage in the woods for every 10 Finns.

My friends decided I should experience a *mökki* for myself. I assumed this would be something akin to the

comfortable vacations I'd enjoyed with my grandparents, when a stay at the cottage entailed plenty of cocktail parties, meals with neighbors, and strolls to town for a daily gabfest.

I was in for something else. When I asked a young woman in Helsinki to define the essence of cottage life, she gazed dreamily into the distance. "Washing dishes without running water or electricity," she murmured. A man next to her nodded approvingly, and added, "Digging ditches." (Only later did I realize he was probably referring to going to the bathroom.) And they both said emphatically: "Not socializing with other people."

On the drive to my first *mökki*, the roads twisted through green fields

MIUKKA ANTILA



On the shores of the Baltic Sea

of barley and rye and stunning yellow swaths of rapeseed. Sturdy red farmhouses and barns were scattered across the countryside. We arrived at a lake, and there in the woods was a very small, very charming cabin. My friends unloaded our supply of drinking water—which, in accordance with *mökki* tradition, consisted primarily of beer—and built a fire to heat the sauna. Someone pointed out the rowboat at the shoreline, noting that a rowboat and a sauna were the only two pieces of equipment necessary for *mökki* living. I was more concerned with a third piece of equipment, but when I found it—and indeed, it was more or less just a ditch—I was pleased to discover it was covered by an equally charming outhouse.

My hosts, men and women alike, armed themselves with forestry gear and disappeared. Had I been a Finn, I would have set off with industrious

intent to thin trees, net fish, forage for mushrooms and berries, putter with hammer and nail, or even hunt down a reindeer. But I remained perched on the porch, enchanted by the sudden quiet.

When the others returned, it was time to unwind. We sat in the sauna. We jumped nude into the lake. We savored some drinking water. Then we clambered back into the sauna and did it all again. And again.

Soon I was much too relaxed to bother with the rowboat, so I just swam out to the middle of the lake and floated naked in the cool water, surrounded by silence and trees. The sky was a pure, empty blue, and there wasn't a single plan for socializing in sight. It was the most care-free and restorative afternoon I'd spent in a decade.

Finland's population is aging and growing richer, so some Finns have expanded the notion of the cottage

getaway. When another Finnish family invited me to their *mökki*, I gladly accepted, but was startled to arrive at a large new home with vaulted ceilings, a fancy kitchen, and exquisite plumbing. It was still on a lake, and had a rowboat and a sauna—a slick electrified one—but lacked any Stone Age charms.

After another day surrounded by woods and water, though, I realized that what made Finnish cottage life so uniquely refreshing—and so different from my summers of socializing in Maine—was just as apparent at this fancy *mökki* as it had been at the simple cabin. These Finns, too, would happily spend weeks in the forest, never seeing a single neighbor. Even with a higher standard of living, the most desirable luxury was still the simple satisfaction of solitude. ■

Trevor Corson is the author of The Secret Life of Lobsters and The Story of Sushi: An Unlikely Saga of Raw Fish and Rice.

MORE ONLINE

For a slideshow narrated by Trevor Corson, visit www.theatlantic.com/finland.

THEATLANTIC.COM

Hangs SUVs its size

Introducing the all-new

Tested like a performance sport sedan, the all-new GLK. Compact, sleek and fr weightier competition. We submit its p torque as proof. Add to that its AGILIT drive, and the GLK is in a performance great engineering at any size. **MBUSA.**

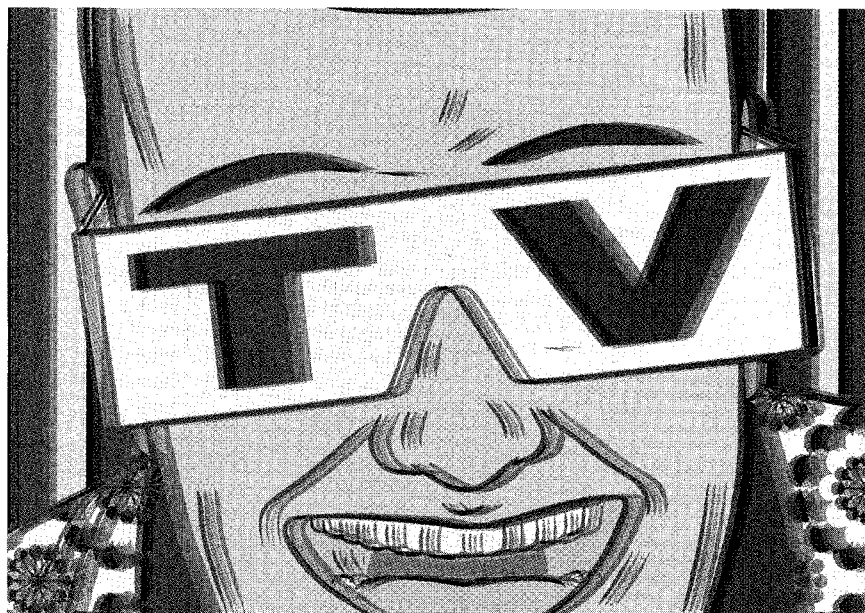
350 shown in optional Iridium Silver metallic paint with optional Premium 1 Package. *MSRP



Mercedes-Benz

taxes, title, regis., transportation charge and dealer prep. ©2009 Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC
For more information, call 1-800-FOR-MERCEDES, or visit MBUSA.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



TECHNOLOGY

Thinking Outside the Box

ARE YOU READY FOR 3-D TV?

By Josh Levin

HALFWAY THROUGH Super Bowl XLIII, the Baltimore Ravens' Ray Lewis instigated a skirmish among a cadre of hip-hop-loving lizards over a bottle of SoBe Lifewater, then morphed into a lizard himself. On the biggest marketing night of the year, however, a standard-issue linebacker-lizard spot has no chance of moving the needle. The solution? SoBe's corporate parent, Pepsi, teamed up with Intel and DreamWorks Animation and reportedly distributed 125 million pairs of 3-D glasses—the eyewear needed to experience SoBe's break-dancing reptiles as well as a three-dimensional trailer for DreamWorks' *Monsters vs. Aliens*.

Like a headache-inducing cicada, 3-D programming shows up on television about once a decade, only to disappear and be forgotten until whenever it appears again. Twelve years ago, NBC and ABC treated America to 3-D episodes of shows like *3rd Rock From the Sun* and *Coach*; America reported back that *Coach* already had two dimensions too many. In 1989, Coca-Cola bankrolled a lizard-free 3-D Super Bowl halftime show starring a magician named Elvis Presto. "I'd just like to say," NBC's Bob Costas intoned sarcastically

as he introduced the segment, "this is one of the single proudest moments of my life."

But this year's 3-D fodder might augur a new era. For one thing, 3-D movies appear primed to transition from a curiosity to a cultural norm, so long as Hollywood and the theater chains find the cash to build more usable screens, now at about 1,700. Starting this year, Jeffrey Katzenberg's DreamWorks will release all of its features in three dimensions, as will Disney's Pixar.

A splashy Super Bowl commercial, 3-D advocates hope, will not only drive traffic to theaters, but also acclimate us to in-home 3-D entertainment. At January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Mitsubishi, LG, Sony, Panasonic, and Samsung trotted out "3-D-ready" televisions, Blu-ray players, and monitors. The always early-adopting porn industry—whose Adult Entertainment Expo was right next door to CES—got an eyeful as well, from a company called Glacier Media Systems, which showed off a PC capable of transforming 2-D films into, in this case, some frighteningly in-your-face pornography.

None of these products is ready for the mass market. While 3-D movie

technology is now relatively uniform, the TV world has far less developed standards. The ads airing during the Super Bowl had to be viewed using amber-and-blue paper glasses; Samsung's and Mitsubishi's 3-D-ready TVs use "active shutter glasses," which alternately cover the left eye and right eye in rapid succession. Some people are pushing head-mounted displays, and there are nascent autostereoscopic technologies that require no glasses at all. After the inevitable format war between HD 3-D, 3-D Max, and a gigantic red-and-blue Viewmaster, this should all get sorted out by, oh, let's say 2050.

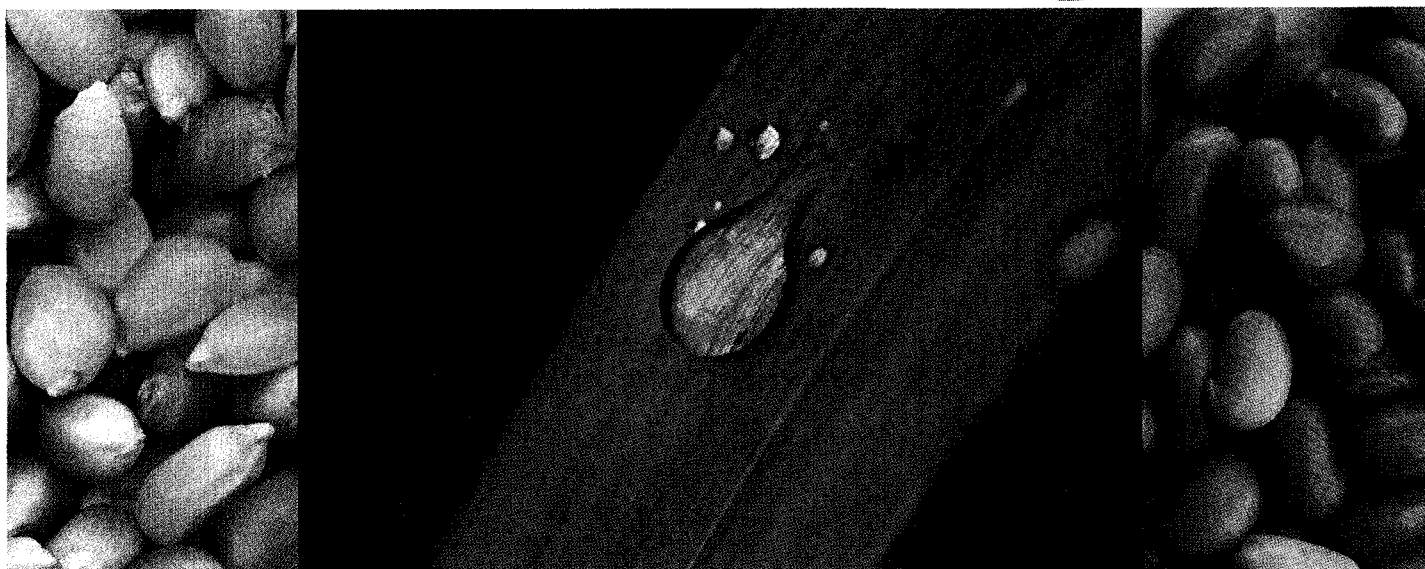
While we're waiting, we have ample time to contemplate how the 3-D boob tube might change home viewing. 3-D and a movie theater are made for each other—since you're already sitting in the dark, wrapping your face in a pair of dorky glasses doesn't have any social costs. Gaming, another medium that requires you to stare straight ahead, is also a natural fit. But what happens to the 3-D viewing experience if you want to lie on the couch or have a conversation? TV watching can be active or passive, a lean-forward pursuit or background noise when we're doing something else. 3-D is an active, opt-in medium, not particularly suited to skipping past commercials. Most kinds of glasses don't work if you're looking out of the corner of your eye.

According to Michael V. Lewis, the CEO of RealD, the firm that stocks most upgrading movie theaters with 3-D technology and glasses, the company's early tests have revealed that what work best in the home are attention-grabbing spectacles like concerts and sporting events. In December, RealD did a test run of a live NFL broadcast. The fans were "drinking, eating, jumping up and down—that's really the benefit and magic of it," Lewis said, noting that the combination of alcohol and 3-D glasses caused no vomiting. The out-of-screen experience, he says, gives people the illusion that they're at the stadium, and their behavior changes accordingly. This seems like the best possible outcome for our 3-D future: sit down, put on some glasses, and your couch is on the 50-yard line. **A**

Josh Levin is a senior editor at Slate.

JASON SCHNEIDER

How can we squeeze more food from a RAINDROP?



Farming feeds the world, but it depends on vital natural resources. Just consider this: irrigation for agriculture consumes 2/3 of the world's fresh water.

Experts have concluded that agricultural output will need to double by 2050 to feed a growing world. We'll need to get more from each drop of irrigated water.

We'll also need to do more with the solution nature already provides: rain. The challenge for farmers is squeezing

the most out of unpredictable rainfall.

That requires putting the latest science-based tools in farmers' hands, including advanced hybrid and biotech seeds. Our goal is to develop seeds that significantly increase crop yields and can help farmers use 1/3 less water per unit produced.

Producing more. Conserving more. Improving farmers' lives. That's sustainable agriculture. And that's what Monsanto seeds are all about.

**Non-irrigated
agriculture
produces 60%
of the world's
food. It will need
to do more.**

Learn more of the story at ProduceMoreConserveMore.com

MONSANTO
imagine®



PRODUCING MORE

CONSERVING MORE

IMPROVING FARMERS' LIVES

© 2008 Monsanto Co. Monsanto Imagine and the Vine Design are trademarks of Monsanto Technology LLC.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Macroeconomics

Economic policy makers thought they had tamed the business cycle. Not quite. Let's hope their hubris doesn't get in the way of our economic recovery.

By Virginia Postrel

CHRISTINA ROMER, the head of President Obama's Council of Economic Advisors, is a liberal economist. The LBJ Presidential Library in Austin is a Democratic shrine. But on a September evening in 2007, Romer used that venue to deliver a bluntly negative assessment of the economic policies that began in the Kennedy and Johnson years. What macroeconomists had believed and done in the heady liberal hour of the 1960s, she declared, was simply wrong—a “mistaken revolution” that hurt the country. “Far from being the high point of economic policymaking in the postwar era, the 1960s represented the beginning of a long dark period for macroeconomic policy,” she said.

Her story went something like this: macroeconomists got cocky in the 1960s, thinking that policy makers could set unemployment at whatever rate they wanted by accepting a related level of inflation. But unemployment can in fact go only so low—to a “natural rate” that depends on real economic factors beyond the influence of monetary or fiscal policy. Trying to push unemployment below 4 percent led to persistent inflation and, ultimately, stagflation, the previously unthinkable combination of high unemployment and high inflation. It took the terrible recession of 1981–82 to kill off inflation. Economists learned their lesson, went back to the more reasonable assumptions of the 1950s but with more-sophisticated models, and we got the “Great Moderation” of the past two decades.

“We have seen the triumph of sensible ideas and have reaped the rewards in terms of macroeconomic performance,” Romer concluded. “The costly wrong turn in ideas and macropolicy of the 1960s and 1970s has been righted and the future of stabilization looks bright.”

She was, as we now know, wrong about the happy ending. In retrospect, what is striking about Romer's lecture is not the chastened tone of its opening but the celebratory nature of its conclusions. “Better policy, particularly on the part of the Federal Reserve, is directly responsible for the low inflation and the virtual disappearance of the business cycle in the last 25 years,” she said (emphasis added). “In this area, the policy mistakes of the 1960s were a painful, but not permanent, detour on the road to excellent economic performance.”

LEFT: SHAUN HEASLEY/REUTERS/CORBIS;
RIGHT: ADAM HUNGER/REUTERS/CORBIS

I don't mean to pick on Romer, who is a fine and careful scholar. Until recently, this triumphalist view was the conventional wisdom. And it isn't 100 percent wrong. Fed policy really did break inflation and keep it low. The relative stability from the mid-'80s to last year really was much better than the economic chaos of the 1970s.

But containing inflation and eliminating, or noticeably dampening, economic downturns are two entirely different things. Congratulating policy makers for "the virtual disappearance of the business cycle" oversteps the evidence and encourages the hubris that fostered the current crisis and could make recovery more difficult. The conventional explanation for the Great Moderation gives too much credit to easily identifiable economic policy makers—"I feel the contribution of good policy cannot be overstated," said Romer—and too little to all those anonymous managers and workers whose everyday actions get summarized in the aggregate statistics that Fed economists watch so closely.

Research published in journals like the *American Economic Review*, dating back to a 2000 article by Margaret McConnell of the New York Fed and Gabriel Perez-Quiros of the European Central Bank, tells a different story. This line of research says that good Fed policy was necessary but not sufficient, that the business cycle never disappeared, and that most of the Great Moderation emerged not from deliberate government policy but from changes in business practices that occurred for competitive reasons having nothing to do with macroeconomic goals.

In the Summer 2008 issue of the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, economists Steven J. Davis and James A. Kahn review this research and further dissect the evidence from both aggregate statistics and individual measurements of things like the lead times for ordering production materials and fluctuations in household spending. What they find fits the broad outlines of Romer's story—but not its congratulatory conclusion. The Great Moderation looks a lot like the staid 1950s, with better inventory management and more-flexible employment contracts.

Companies that make durable goods—products that last a long time,

like refrigerators, cars, and computers—got better at predicting sales and adjusting production. When demand dropped, inventories didn't pile up, so plants didn't have to shut down until they could sell all that extra stuff. Work hours might have fluctuated more but temporary layoffs, which used to be routine, became rarer. Economic statistics got less volatile, not because of Fed policy (though low inflation made this evolution easier and more apparent) but because of changing business practices. Those innovations made businesses more productive and efficient, but they didn't eliminate recessions or the pain they cause.

When economists talk about the Great Moderation, they don't mean simply growth without inflation—something Fed policy deserves credit for. They mean fewer and smaller fluctuations in overall output, otherwise known as GDP. If you graph the rate of GDP growth from 1947 to 2007, you get a jagged line that does look less jumpy beginning in the mid-1980s. Something did change. The question is what.

Davis, a professor at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, and Kahn, of NYU's Stern School of Business and the New York Fed, look at GDP as the sum of different kinds of industries and then compare the fluctuations within them. Not every part of the economy moves in the same way.

As a general rule, durable-goods production tends to be the most volatile sector of the economy. Since people usually have a stock of durables in use, when times get tight, they put off new purchases. What seem like small cutbacks to the end buyer translate into big swings for the producer. Consider a business that owns 100 trucks and needs to replace two trucks this year. Business sags, so the firm replaces only one truck, operating with 99—a 1 percent reduction in its fleet but a 50 percent reduction in the truck

maker's sales. (Similarly, if half the people who might buy a consumer durable—a new TV, say—decide to put it off for a year, that's a 50 percent drop in sales.) Services, by contrast, tend to be the least volatile part of the economy, with nondurable goods such as clothes and groceries somewhere in the middle.

When Davis and Kahn broke down the GDP data by sector, they found that from 1970 on, the size of fluctuations in services didn't change much. Nondurable goods became only modestly less volatile than they had been before 1980. The dramatic smoothing of the jagged line that appears when you graph all of GDP together mirrors what happened in only a single sector: durable goods. So the Great Moderation wasn't a general phenomenon. It was something that happened in that one particular

part of manufacturing. (The economy's shift to more services and less durable-goods production did calm things down, but not enough to account for the big change.)

Another way to look at the GDP graph is to think of fluctuations over different lengths of time. To take a simple case, economic output is much greater in the daytime than at night, and greater during the week than on the weekend. If you chart them on a graph, these fluctuations will

look much bigger than the difference between a recession and a boom. But nobody worries about them, because they're predictable and take place over very short periods of time.

Similarly, it's easier for people to adjust their saving and spending for short-term layoffs or reductions in work hours than for long-term job cuts amid a recession. The goal of what macroeconomists call "stabilization policy" is to curb the sustained and unpredictable fluctuations—specifically the downturns—that create the business cycle.

Davis and Kahn divided GDP fluctuations into two categories: "high-frequency" cycles lasting fewer than

Most of the Great Moderation emerged not from deliberate government policy but from changes in business practices that occurred for competitive reasons.



12 quarters; and "business cycles" lasting longer. (Since World War II, the average business cycle, from peak to peak, has lasted more than six years.) They compared the two kinds of cycles in each of three distinct periods: 1954–69 ("relatively tranquil"), 1970–83 ("turbulent"), and 1984–2004 (the Great Moderation, up to the end of the available data).

Sure enough, the big change after 1983 wasn't in the long-term ups and downs of the business cycle, which returned to the pre-1970 pattern. It was in the high-frequency fluctuations, which got dramatically less severe after 1983. This fits the result that Davis and Kahn found when they looked at durable-goods makers. Improvements in business operations had eliminated many short-term ups and downs. The long-term business cycle, meanwhile, simply returned to the kinds of fluctuations experienced in the '50s and '60s—a relief after the crazy ride of the 1970s but hardly an end to recessions.

Unfortunately, this modest story isn't the one that policy makers accepted. "The Fed believed in itself a lot," says Kahn. "It patted itself on the back for its role in the Great Moderation, thinking that monetary policy had rounded some corner and it was a new age." And in trying to achieve the dream of permanent stabilization, overly ambitious macroeconomists instituted policies that once again led to unintended consequences—not inflation this time, but a real-estate bubble.

In 2001, the Fed aggressively cut interest rates, driving them down much lower than its policies since the mid-1980s would have predicted. The goal was to stave off recession and avoid the kind of deflation that Japan had experienced in the 1990s. But the cuts backfired. Those excessively low rates set off a housing bubble and all the consequences that flowed from it. The peak of the boom, Stanford economist John B. Taylor estimates, saw about 250,000 more new housing starts a year than there would have been if the Fed had followed its old practices. (Similar patterns of low interest rates and housing bubbles also occurred in many European countries.)

To make matters worse, Taylor argues, once the financial crisis began in August 2007, policy makers and

many Wall Street traders misdiagnosed the problem as a shortage of liquidity—something the Fed could address by making it easier for banks to borrow from the government. But the problem was really so-called counterparty risk: financial institutions couldn't trust the securities they were buying from and selling to each other. To compensate for this risk, banks charged each other much higher interest rates.

"This was not a situation like the Great Depression where just printing money or providing liquidity was the solution; rather it was due to fundamental problems in the financial sector," Taylor writes in a survey of his published research on the crisis. The only way to fix the problem is to clean up the banks' balance sheets, bringing in more capital to make them stronger and marking down bad loans (reducing their principal amounts) to make them more trustworthy.

That prescription is more painful, and much less politically palatable, than slashing interest rates or ramping up federal spending. But the need for restructuring is what makes serious financial crises different from ordinary recessions—and why the recessions those crises set off tend to last an especially long time. The longer the restructuring is postponed, the longer the recession will linger, as Japan learned during its "lost decade" of the 1990s.

"It isn't just Japan," says Harvard economist Kenneth S. Rogoff, who with Carmen M. Reinhart of the University of Maryland has analyzed 800 years of banking crises. "You can study all the financial crises, and there is a common pattern, that the faster you mark down the assets in the financial system and recapitalize the banks," the sooner the economy recovers, he says. "As long as you leave the banking system sick, you're not going to have sustained growth."

Good policy may limit the pain. But, as the unknown story of the Great Moderation itself suggests, even the best policy can go only so far. As discomfiting as it is to both market optimists and policy activists, a certain amount of instability is inherent to the economy. **A**

Virginia Postrel, an Atlantic contributing editor, is editor in chief of deepglamour.net.

ESCAPE PACKAGES FROM \$89 PER NIGHT

ENTERTAINMENT CREDITS
PREFERRED SHOW SEATING
FINE DINING CREDITS
GRAND SPA DISCOUNTS

mgmgrand.com/escape



CHECK OUT WHAT'S
EXCITING AT MGM GRAND

KÀ BY CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

CRAIG FERGUSON

TOM COLICCHIO'S CRAFTSTEAK



Don't Fear the Reaper

Learning to love the slasher-film renaissance

By James Parker

THE MODERN SLASHER movie, like your correspondent, is a child of the 1970s. But the slasher himself, the splatterer, the reaver of life, swinging out of the darkness with his death claw cocked, is as old as the hills (which have eyes, as we know). The slasher enforces those clauses of our contract with existence that we feel to be most punitive—the suddenness, that is, with which the whole thing can be revoked, and the sharpness or rigidity of the objects that are often involved. Getting slashed is human, all too human. “Reality was giving its lesson,” wrote Ted Hughes in one of his *Crow* poems, “Its mishmash of scripture and physics, / With here, brains in hands, for example, / And there, legs in a treetop.” Or, in the words of Tobe Hooper, creator of 1974’s *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*: “The true monster itself is death.”

Slasher films, as a consequence, have always done rather well. The classic

slasher flick is produced at high speed, on a squeaker of a budget, and bows briefly for an anointing of critical scorn before going on to make piles of money. With a bit of luck, that critical scorn will be amplified into cultural censure—1980’s rape-revenge slasher, *I Spit on Your Grave*, for instance, was widely and windily reviled, to the enduring profit of its makers. “The more the film was attacked,” writer-director Meir Zarchi confided to *Variety* last year, “the more money shot into my pocket.”

Zarchi was talking to *Variety* because he’s currently involved in an *I Spit on Your Grave* remake, news of which increases the sensation that this year we’re caught in some kind of slasher loop or wormhole. January brought a 3-D remake of 1981’s *My Bloody Valentine*. A month later, New Line Cinema released its remake of 1980’s *Friday the 13th*, which was followed last month by a remake of Wes

Craven’s 1972 directorial debut, *The Last House on the Left*. And October—high season for slashers—will give us a sequel to Rob Zombie’s 2007 remake of 1978’s *Halloween*.

Spin-offs come with the territory, of course, unkillable recurrence being something of a slasher theme. To date there have been nine *Halloweens* and six *Texas Chain Saw Massacres*. There have been eight films starring *Nightmare on Elm Street*’s Freddy Krueger, and next year there’ll be another. Hockey-masked Jason Voorhees, God love him, has trudged with zombie stoicism through a dozen *Friday the 13th*s. In a tolerant spirit, the slasher fan gets in line for the new sequel or prequel or remake or “reboot.” If it’s crap, so what? The next one might be better.

But why this press of remakes, this slasher-jam at the box office, right now? Naturally, theories abound. One hears (often from the filmmakers themselves)

MORE ONLINE

For audio commentary by James Parker on clips from slasher flicks, visit www.theatlantic.com/horror.

THEATLANTIC.COM

JULIA AMES

that horror tends to boom in wartime, and that our lately renewed interest in torn flesh has the same relation to Iraq that *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and *The Last House on the Left* had to Vietnam. ("Thanks to George Bush and Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld," Eli Roth, director of *Hostel* and *Hostel II*, told Fox News, "there's a whole new wave of horror movies.")

But a better explanation might be that the success of the two newest slasher franchises—Roth's *Hostel* flicks and the *Saw* cycle—has simply concentrated the mind of the industry. The first *Hostel* made more than \$80 million worldwide in 2006, off a budget of less than \$5 million; the first *Saw*, \$103 million in 2004, on an investment of barely more than a million. These numbers are electric, invigorating: they have reanimated the slashers of yore, like the fortuitous lightning bolt that gooses our man Jason in *Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives*, or the severed power line that zaps him back to sentience in *Friday the 13th Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan*.

Saw and *Hostel* succeeded, above all, because they are serious slasher flicks. The extremity of their goriness reclaimed the splatter death from mainstream movies (where it's become unremarkable to see a man fed screaming to a propeller, or run through with a drill bit). And the immersive nastiness of their aesthetic—decayed bathrooms, foul workshops, seeping industrial spaces, blades blotched with rust—distilled the slasher-flick elixir: *atmosphere*. No franchise thrives without it. *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* had it: a choking, sunstruck intimacy, with madness pulsing in the eyeballs. *Halloween* was suburban-autumnal, a minor rhapsody of long shots and breezy streets and scuttling leaves, the whole effect tingling like wind chimes inside the empty psychosis of the slasher Michael Myers. *Friday the 13th* was strictly B-movie in its technique, but it succeeded in perforating an American idyll: summer camp was never the same after those nice guitar-strumming sing-along kids got slashed in their lakeside cabins.

Just as crucially, *Saw* and *Hostel* feature excellent and novel villains. If G. K. Chesterton had been a gore hound,

he might have come up with somebody like the *Saw* franchise's Jigsaw, the terminally ill torture whiz whose schemes have a queer philosophical power. "Hello, Paul. You're a perfectly healthy, sane, middle-class male. Yet last month you ran a straight razor across your wrist. Did you cut yourself because you truly want to die? ... Tonight you'll show me." (Paul duly perishes trying to escape the maze of razor wire that Jigsaw has constructed.)

The *Hostel* franchise, meanwhile, has refreshed one of the deepest conventions of the genre—travel as a means to getting slashed. Once more the backpack becomes the symbol of elemental trespass, as American kids blunder irreligiously across eastern Europe looking for sex and pot and complaining that they can't understand the local TV. Correction comes in the form of Elite Hunting, an international torture ring whose victims are abducted, strapped to chairs by huge Slavic mafiosi in creaking black-leather coats, and then chopped or drilled to death. Elite Hunting's paying customers, drawn mostly from the CEO layer, are a fascinating crew: "D'you think we're sick?" one of them worries in *Hostel II*, en route to his maiden torture session. "Fuck no!" says his buddy, a corporate carnivore in the *American Psycho* mold. "Dude, you look anywhere in the world where there's no law, whether it's fuckin' ... *Chad* or New Orleans, *this* is the shit people are doing, bro! We're the normal ones!" (*Takes hit of coke*.)

SENSITIVE READERS WILL have registered the use of the word *torture* twice in the last paragraph. Perhaps they've already heard the term *torture porn*, a label invented in 2006 by the critic David Edelstein for the particular nexus of gore and excitement that he located in *Saw*, *Hostel*, and—interestingly enough—Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. The phrase has since become one of those bywords for civilizational collapse, like Perez Hilton or too much estrogen in our drinking water.

But civilizational collapse, the rending of the established order, has always been part of the slasher's brief. Look at Grendel, the ur-slasher, the slaughterous bog-dweller whose war

on society and eventual comeuppance are chronicled in the thousand-year-old text of *Beowulf*. Slasher-wise, Grendel's got it all. He's a blue blood of homicide, directly descended from Cain, with a mother who (like Mrs. Voorhees in *Friday the 13th*) will avenge his death with her own string of sub-slashings before being (again like Mrs. Voorhees) decapitated. He has, in addition, the true slasher's great hatred of parties—nothing primes his purpose like the sound of a harp being struck. And as he makes his last incursion into the drowsed mead hall, we can even see the *Beowulf* poet employing a Dark Ages version of that staple of slasher-flick technology, the Steadicam. In Seamus Heaney's translation from the Old English:

The iron-braced door
turned on its hinge when his hands
touched it ... while a baleful light,
flame more than light, flared from
his eyes.
He saw many men in the mansion,
sleeping,
a ranked company of kinsmen and
warriors
quartered together.

Scaly knuckles against the door, and the snoring victims picked out in hell-fire flashes—a single smooth shot, as it were, from the camera mounted on Grendel's forehead. Ten or so centuries later, armed with his new Panaglides (Panavision's clone of the Steadicam), director John Carpenter would pull off something similar in *Halloween*.

Not only is there nothing new under the sun, there's precious little of novelty under the moon, either. Sir Halewyn the Miserable, the supernatural serial killer of medieval European balladry, liked to slice out hearts with a sickle—much in the manner of *My Bloody Valentine*'s murderer, Harry Warden. Your hockey-masked machete artists, your chain-saw assassins, are cinematic iterations of an ancient and venerated principle. If they unsettle, if they horrify, if they augur the end of the Western world, they're only doing their job. They are a company, a guild. Leatherface, Jason, Michael Myers, Freddy, Jigsaw, and the sportsmen of Elite Hunting—traditionalists to a man. ■

James Parker is an Atlantic correspondent.

FOR ALL THE ADVANCES and wonders of our global era, Christians, Jews, and Muslims seem ever more locked in mortal combat. But history suggests a happier outcome for the Peoples of the Book. As technological evolution has brought communities, nations, and faiths into closer contact, it is the prophets of tolerance and love that have prospered, along with the religions they represent. Is globalization, in fact, God's will?

ONE WORLD, UNDER GOD

By Robert Wright

FOR MANY CHRISTIANS, the life of Jesus signifies the birth of a new kind of God, a God of universal love. The Hebrew Bible—the “Old Testament”—chronicled a God who was sometimes belligerent (espousing the slaughter of infidels), unabashedly nationalist (pro-Israel, you might say), and often harsh toward even his most favored nation. Then Jesus came along and set a different tone. As depicted in the Gospels, Jesus exhorted followers to extend charity across ethnic bounds, as in the parable of the good Samaritan, and even to love their enemies. He told them to turn the other cheek, said the meek would inherit the Earth, and warned against self-righteousness (“let he who is without sin cast the first stone”). Even while on the cross, he found compassion for his persecutors: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

But there's a funny thing about these admirable utterances: none of them appears in the book of Mark, which was written before the other Gospels and which most New Testament scholars now consider the most reliable (or, as some would put it, the least unreliable) Gospel guide to Jesus' life. The Jesus in Mark, far from calmly forgiving his killers, seems surprised by the Crucifixion and hardly sanguine about it (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). In Mark, there is no Sermon on the Mount, and so no Beatitudes, and there is no good Samaritan; Jesus' most salient comment on ethnic relations is to compare a woman to a dog because she isn't from Israel.

The more familiar Jesus, the one who stresses tolerance and interethnic charity, shows up in the books of Matthew and Luke, which seem to have been written a decade or two after Mark—about half a century after the Crucifixion. This

HOLLY LINDEM

late arrival of the “good” Jesus is enough to make you wonder whether the real Jesus, the “historical Jesus,” was really so good. And in fact some scholars have wondered that. But they’ve been overshadowed by scholars who bring a message less threatening to modern Christians—that the historical Jesus indeed preached boundless love and that, if anything, it is the less liberal teachings that were put into his mouth post-mortem. This is the drift of the much-publicized Jesus Seminar, through which scores of scholars have voted on the various sayings of Jesus to yield a collective estimation of their authenticity.

Why would some scholars downplay the earliest description of Jesus in favor of accounts compiled after there had been more time for myth to accumulate? In part, maybe, because some of them are Christians, or at least lapsed Christians who still resonate to their native faith. But in part, also, because it’s not obvious why a whole mythology about a “good” Jesus would have taken shape decades after the Crucifixion. What, after all, would have inspired early followers of Jesus to invent the idea of a brotherhood that knows no ethnic or national bounds?

Clues have been emerging in recent years, but not clues of the usual kind—not long-lost scrolls or other ancient artifacts. The clues come from the modern world, and they’re all around us. It’s increasingly apparent how analogous a globalizing world is to the environment in which Christianity took shape after Jesus’ death. And in this light, it makes sense that early devotees of the crucified Jesus would develop the now-familiar Christian message, which could later be attributed to Jesus himself.

The chief author of this message seems to have been Paul, whose epistles—letters to congregations of Jesus followers—are the oldest writings in the New Testament. If you view Paul not just as a preacher but as an entrepreneur, as someone who is trying to build a religious organization that spans the Roman Empire, then his writings assume a new cast. For Paul, the doctrines that now form the most-inspiring parts of the Christian message are, in a sense, business tools. They are tools that let him use the information technology of his day, the epistle, to extend his brand, the Jesus brand, across the vast, open, multinational platform offered by the Roman Empire.

To conventional Christians, this may sound doubly dispiriting. First, Jesus wasn’t really Jesus; he didn’t really preach the deep moral truths that have given weight to the claim that he was the son of an infinitely good God. And, as if to rub salt in the wound: those truths, when they finally *did* enter the Christian tradition, emerged not so much from philosophical reflection as from pragmatic calculation and other disappointingly mundane forces.

There’s no denying that this view threatens the claim that Christians, in worshipping Jesus, recognize God’s one physical appearance on Earth and thus have special insight into divine purpose. Still, as debunkings of scripture go, this one is fairly congenial to religious belief, for it does leave

open the prospect of divine purpose generically. In fact, it underscores that prospect. The story of early Christianity highlights a kind of moral direction in human history, a current that, however fitfully, has repeatedly expanded the circle of tolerance, even amity. And if history naturally produces moral insight—however mundane the machinery that mediates its articulation—then maybe some overarching purpose is built into the human endeavor after all.

In any event, whether or not history has a purpose, its moral direction is hard to deny. Since the Stone Age, the scope of social organization has expanded, from hunter-gatherer society through city-state through empire and beyond. And often this expansion has entailed the extension of mutual understanding across bounds of ethnicity, religion, or nationality. Indeed, it turns out that formative periods in both Islam and Judaism evince the same dynamic as early Christianity: an imperial, multiethnic milieu winds up fostering a tolerance of other ethnicities and faiths.

Now, as we approach the global level of social organization—and see the social order threatened by strife among these Abrahamic religions—another burst of moral progress is needed. Success is hardly guaranteed,

but at least the early history of Christianity and indeed of all Abrahamic faiths gives cause for hope. However bleak a globalizing world may look at times, the story could still have a happy ending, an ending that brings out the best in religion as religion brings out the best in people.

THE APOSTLE OF LOVE

The “Apostle Paul” wasn’t one of Jesus’ 12 apostles. Quite the opposite: after the Crucifixion he seems to have persecuted followers of Jesus. According to the book of Acts, he was “ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.” But then, while on his way to treat Syrian followers of Jesus in this fashion, he underwent his “road to Damascus” conversion. He was blinded by the light and heard the voice of Jesus. This changed his perspective. He eventually decided that Jesus was the path to salvation. Paul devoted the rest of his life to spreading this message, and he was very good at it.

Paul, a well-educated Jew from the city of Tarsus, has long been recognized as a figure whose influence on Christianity rivals that of Jesus himself. And it’s long been clear—and hardly surprising—that he is a big champion of themes Christianity is famous for, such as love and brotherhood. The 13th chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians includes an ode to love so powerful that it is a staple at modern weddings. (“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful ...”) And it is Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, who gives us the New Testament’s familiar extension of brotherhood across bounds of ethnicity, class, even (notwithstanding the term *brotherhood*) gender: “There is no longer Jew or Greek,

Formative periods in both Islam and Judaism evince the same dynamic as early Christianity: an imperial, multiethnic milieu winds up fostering a tolerance of other ethnicities and faiths.

there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”

Of course, since Paul was writing after the time of Jesus, it's been natural to assume he got these ideas from the teachings of Jesus. But when you realize that Jesus utters the word *love* only twice in the Gospel of Mark—compared with Paul's using it more than 10 times in a single letter to the Romans—the reverse scenario suggests itself: maybe the Gospel of Mark, which was written not long after the end of Paul's ministry, largely escaped Pauline influence, and thus left more of the real Jesus intact than Gospels written later, after Paul's legacy had spread.

But one problem with this scenario has always been the difficulty of pinpointing the origin of Paul's emphasis on a love that crosses ethnic bounds, for this emphasis doesn't really follow from his core message. That message can be broken into four parts: Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, the Christ; the Messiah died as a kind of payment for the sins of humanity; humans who believed this—who acknowledged the redemption that Christ had realized on their behalf—could have eternal life; but they'd better evince this faith quickly, for Judgment Day was coming. This message may suggest a loving God, but it says nothing directly about the importance of people's loving one another, much less about the importance of extending that love globally.

So why did Paul become the point man for a God whose love knows no bounds of race or geography? Is it because he was naturally loving and tolerant, a man who effortlessly imbued all he met with a sense of belonging? Unlikely. Even in his correspondence, which presumably reflects a filtered version of the inner Paul, we see him declaring that followers of Jesus who disagree with him about the gospel message should be “accursed”—that is, condemned by God to eternal suffering. The scholar John Gager, in his book *Reinventing Paul*, described Paul as a “feisty preacher-organizer, bitterly attacked and hated by other apostles within the Jesus movement.”

No, the origins of Paul's doctrine of interethnic love lie not in his own loving-kindness, though for all we know he mustered much of that in the course of his life. The doctrine emerges from the interplay between Paul's driving ambitions and his social environment.

In the Roman Empire, the century after the Crucifixion was a time of dislocation. People streamed into cities from farms and small towns, encountered alien cultures and peoples, and often faced this flux without the support of kin. The situation was somewhat like that at the turn of the 20th century in the United States, when industrialization drew Americans into turbulent cities, away from their extended families. Back then, as the social scientist Robert Putnam has observed, rootless urbanites found grounding in up-and-coming social organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus and the Rotary Club. You might expect comparable conditions in the early Roman Empire to spawn comparable organizations. Indeed, Roman cities saw a growth in voluntary associations. Some were vocational guilds, some more like clubs, and some were religious cults (*cults* in the ancient sense of “groups devoted to the worship of one or more gods,” not in the modern sense of “wacky fringe groups”).

But whatever their form, they often amounted to what one scholar has called “fictive families” for people whose real families were off in some distant village or town.

The familial services offered by these groups ranged from the material, like burying the dead, to the psychological, like giving people a sense that other people cared about them. On both counts, early Christian churches met the needs of the day. As for the material, the church, wrote the classicist E. R. Dodds, provided “the essentials of social security: it cared for widows and orphans, the old, the unemployed, and the disabled; it provided a burial fund for the poor and a nursing service in time of plague.” As for the psychological, in Paul's writing, *brothers* is a synonym for *followers of Jesus*. A church was one big family.

To some extent, then, what Paul called “brotherly love” was just a product of his times. The Christian church was offering the spirit of kinship that people needed, the spirit of kinship that other organizations offered. A term commonly applied to such an organization was *thiasos*, or “confraternity”; the language of brotherhood wasn't, by itself, an innovation.

Still, early Christian writings use “kinship vocabulary to a degree wholly unparalleled among contemporary social organizations,” Joseph Hellerman wrote in his book *The Ancient Church as Family*. In that letter to the Corinthians that is excerpted at so many weddings, Paul uses the appellation *brothers* more than 20 times.

PAUL AS CEO

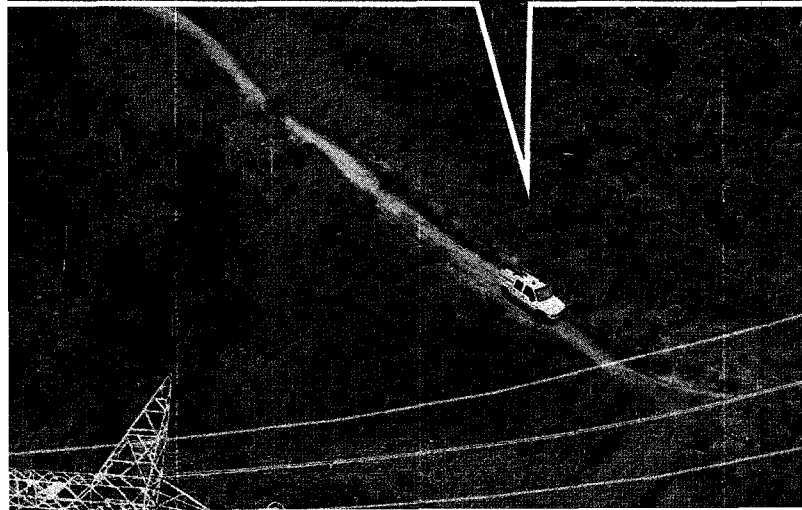
Why all the kin talk? Because Paul wasn't satisfied to just have a congregation in Corinth; he wanted to set up franchises—congregations of Jesus followers—in cities across the Roman Empire. These imperial aspirations, it turns out, infused Paul's preaching with an emphasis on brotherly love that it might never have acquired had Paul been content to run a single mom-and-pop store.

Anyone who wanted to set up a far-flung organization in the ancient world faced two big challenges: transportation technology and information technology. In those days information couldn't travel faster than the person carrying it, who in turn couldn't travel faster than the animal carrying the person. Once Paul had founded a congregation and departed to found another one in a distant city, he was in another world; he couldn't return often to check on the operation, and he couldn't fire off e-mails to keep church leaders in line.

Faced with what strike us today as such glaring technological deficiencies, Paul made the most of what information technology there was: epistles. He sent letters to distant congregations in an attempt to keep them consonant with his overall mission. The results are with us today in the form of the New Testament's Pauline epistles (or at least the seven, out of 13, that most scholars consider authentic), mainly written two to three decades after the Crucifixion. These letters aren't just inspiring spiritual reflections, but tools for solving administrative problems.

Consider that famous ode to love in 1 Corinthians. Paul wrote this letter in response to a crisis. Since his departure from Corinth, the church had been split by factionalism, and he faced rivals for authority. Early in the letter, he laments the

How can we deliver
cleaner energy today

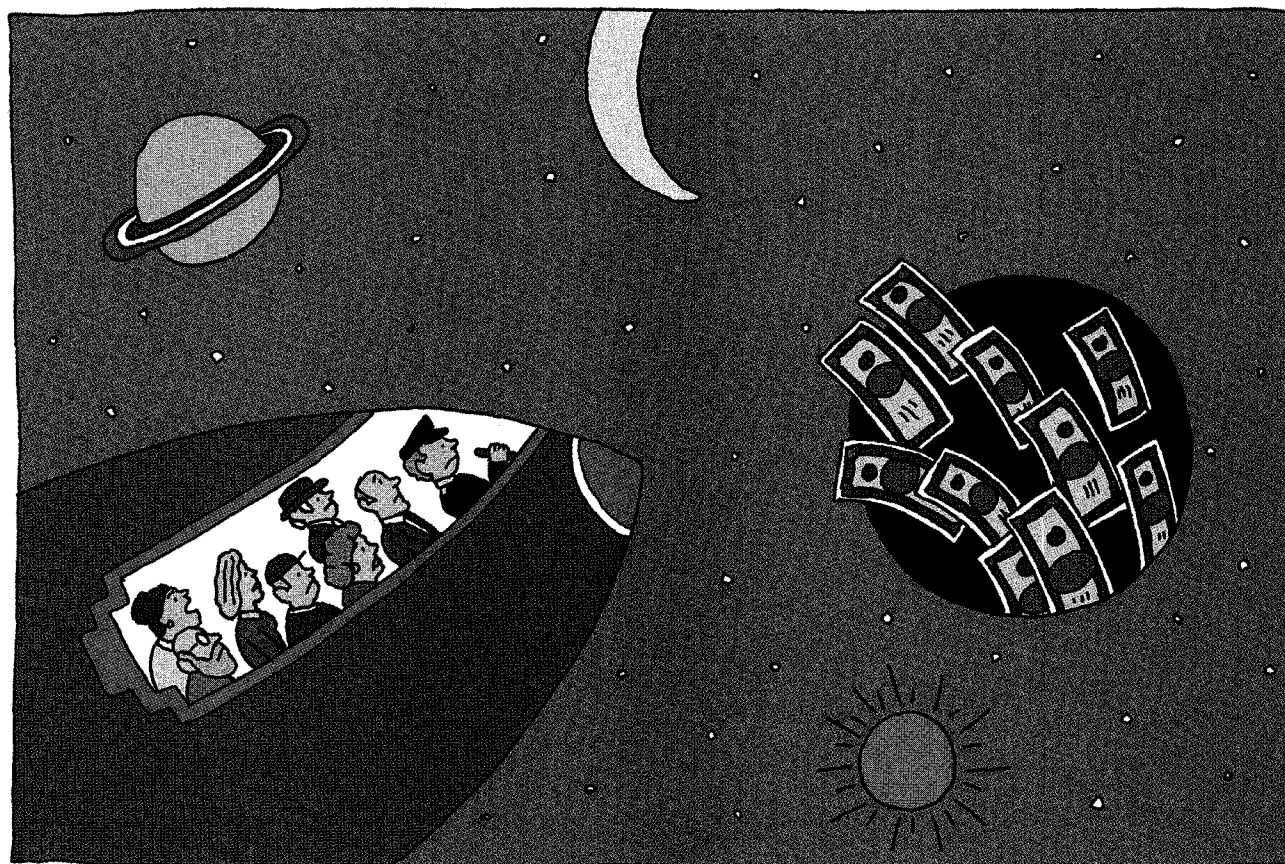


The Siemens answer: An efficient energy conversion chain with the world's most efficient combined cycle gas turbine, saving up to 40,000 tons of CO₂.

Delivering environmentally friendly energy means generating and transmitting power more efficiently while enabling reliable distribution. Being the only company worldwide that offers solutions covering the entire energy conversion chain, we develop innovative ways to reduce emissions. For instance, our newest gas turbine will enable the combined cycle plant in Irsching, Germany to save up to 40,000 tons of CO₂ per year while powering a city of three million people.

www.siemens.com/answers

SIEMENS



fact that some congregants say “I belong to Paul,” whereas others say “I belong to Cephas.” (Cephas is another name for Peter.)

There was another obstacle. Many in the church—“enthusiasts,” some scholars call them—believed themselves to have direct access to divine knowledge and to be near spiritual perfection. Some thought they needn’t accept the church’s guidance in moral matters. Some showed off their spiritual gifts by spontaneously speaking in tongues during worship services—something that might annoy the humbler worshippers and that, in large enough doses, could derail a service. As the German scholar Günther Bornkamm put it, “The mark of the ‘enthusiasts’ was that they disavowed responsible obligation toward the rest.”

In other words: they lacked brotherly love. Hence Paul’s harping on that theme in 1 Corinthians, and especially in chapter 13. It is in reference to members’ disrupting worship by speaking in tongues that Paul writes, “If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” And when he says, “Love is not envious or boastful or arrogant,” he is chastising Corinthians who deploy their spiritual gifts—whether speaking in tongues, or prophesying, or even being generous—in a competitive, showy way.

The beauty of “brotherly love” wasn’t just that it produced cohesion in Christian congregations. Invoking familial feelings also allowed Paul to assert his authority at the expense

of rivals. After all, wasn’t it he, not they, who had founded the family of Corinthian Christians? He tells the Corinthians that he is writing “to admonish you as my beloved children ... Indeed, in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. I appeal to you, then, be imitators of me.”

Had Paul stayed among the Corinthians, he might have kept the congregation united by the mere force of his presence, with less preaching about the need for unity—the need for all brothers to be one in “the body of Christ.” But because he felt compelled to move on, and to cultivate churches across the empire, he had to implant brotherly love as a governing value and nurture it assiduously. In the case of 1 Corinthians, chapter 13, the result was some of Western civilization’s most beautiful literature—if, perhaps, more beautiful out of context than in.

Thus, for the ambitious preacher of early Christianity, the doctrine of brotherly love had at least two virtues. First, fraternal bonding made churches attractive places to be, providing a familial warmth that was otherwise lacking, for many people, in a time of urbanization and flux. As Elaine Pagels wrote in *Beyond Belief*, “From the beginning, what attracted outsiders who walked into a gathering of Christians ... was the presence of a group joined by spiritual power into an extended family.” (And there is no doubt that Paul wanted his churches to project an appealing image. In 1 Corinthians he asks: If “the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter,

AN INVESTIGATION CRITICAL TO YOUR HEALTH.

TUESDAY

SAVE YOUR TUESDAY FOR

FRONTLINE

SICK AROUND AMERICA

MARCH 31 9PM_{ET/PT}

Be more



PBS

will they not say that you are out of your mind?”) Second, the doctrine of brotherly love became a form of remote control, a tool Paul could use at a distance to induce congregational cohesion.

By itself, this emphasis on brotherhood might not have called for doctrinal innovation. Long before Paul's time, the Hebrew Bible had told people, “Love your neighbor as yourself”—an injunction, scholars now agree, meaning that you should love fellow Israelites (and an injunction Jesus quotes in the book of Mark). And for all we know, some of Paul's congregations weren't ethnically diverse—in which case cohesion within them called for nothing more than this sort of intra-ethnic bonding. So what exactly in Paul's experience fostered the distinctive connotation of *Christian* brotherly love—the “universal” part, the part that crosses ethnic and national boundaries?

Part of the answer is that transcending ethnicity was built into Paul's conception of his divinely imparted mission. He was to be the apostle to the Gentiles; as a Jew, he was to

carry the saving grace of the Jewish Messiah—Jesus Christ—beyond the Jewish world, to many nations. (And he probably didn't get this idea from Jesus, whose encouragement of international proselytizing at the very end of Mark seems to have been added to the book well after its creation.) Here, at the origin of his aspirations, Paul is crossing the bridge he famously crossed in saying there is no longer “Jew or Greek,” for all are now eligible for God's salvation.

In putting Jew and Greek on an equal basis, Paul was, in a sense, giving pragmatism priority over scriptural principle. By Paul's own account, the scriptural basis for his mission to the Gentiles lay in prophetic texts—notably, apocalyptic writings in the book of Isaiah, which half a millennium earlier had envisioned a coming Messiah and a long-overdue burst of worldwide reverence for Yahweh. And this part of Isaiah isn't exactly an ode to ethnic egalitarianism. The basic idea is that Gentile nations will abjectly submit to the rule of Israel's God and hence to Israel. God promises the Israelites that after salvation arrives, Egyptians and Ethiopians alike

MEMORY

When I was twelve years old I climbed into
a tent beside a fire and listened while
two men swapped stories from Korea.
The first was eloquent about the Turks.
At night they sang around their fires
then suddenly went silent. Sunrise,
the Chinese pickets other side were dead.
Men thought this happened once the singing stopped,
but no, the campfires and the songs disguised
approach up to each picket's back.
“The Turks,” the first man said, “had a wonderful ear.”

And the other man nodded and laughed,
then prodded the coals. He had a stick for that,
and worked it through the fire, back and forth,
back and forth, pausing every time it caught.
The stick would light; he'd lift and watch,
then let it go black out, working its tip
back down into the fire. He did this as
he talked about a truck at night
hit by a mortar shell so that it wrecked,
steering column pinning the driver's chest,
driver talking fast, truck catching fire.

They used acetylene and had
the steering column almost cut.
And this was just a kid, maybe twenty,
that too, telling them, yes, he understood,
and nodding when they said they'd get him out.
Then there were flames. Not much at first. Then more.
Till everyone was backing from the light.
I mean the man now working the stick,
making it catch and watching it go out,
then pushing it through the fire again,
that man here, and others there, then, backing, watching.

And what they see, I hear him say,
is silhouette and pantomime,
a dance around a wheel until a gun goes off,
the young man's sergeant walking back.
But now the story isn't words;
it is a screen that lights itself
around a fire climbing through low voices,
where no one rises from the wheel in which
each waits for who walks out and who walks back
and where the second man, clearing his throat,
prods the fire, starts another story.

—Wyatt Prunty

Wyatt Prunty's new collection is *The Lover's Guide to Trapping*.
He teaches at the University of the South, where he also directs the Sewanee
Writers' Conference.



“shall come over to you and be yours, they shall come over in chains and bow down to you. They will make supplication to you.” Indeed, “every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” Thus, “in the LORD all the offspring of Israel shall triumph and glory.”

Christians like to look back and see Jesus’ arrival foreshadowed in the less nationalistic passages of Isaiah—such as Yahweh’s promise to bring salvation “to the end of the earth,” with Israel ultimately serving a selfless role of illumination, as a “light unto the nations.” But this passage is ambiguous in context and, anyway, isn’t the passage Paul himself emphasized. In explaining his mission to the Gentiles in a letter to the Romans, he quotes the verse about every knee bowing and every tongue swearing, without mentioning anything about a light unto the nations. He declares that his job is to help “win obedience from the Gentiles.” In line with past apocalyptic prophets, he seems to think that the point of the exercise is for the world to submit to Israel’s Messiah; Jesus, Paul says in quoting 1 Isaiah, is “the one who rises to rule the Gentiles.”

But ultimately this Judeo-centric disposition mattered little compared with the facts on the ground. Any residual scriptural overtones of Jewish superiority to Gentiles that Paul may have carried into his work were diluted by a key strategic decision he made early on.

BARRIERS TO ENTRY

Some other Jewish followers of Jesus wanted, like Paul, to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. But many of them insisted that to qualify for Christ’s saving grace, Gentiles had to abide by Jewish law, the Torah, which enjoined strict dietary rules and, for males, circumcision. In the days before modern anesthesia, requiring men to have penis surgery before they could join a religion fell under the rubric of *disincentive*.

Paul grasped the importance of such barriers to entry. So far as Gentiles were concerned, he jettisoned most of the Jewish dietary code and, with special emphasis, the circumcision mandate. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.” Paul was so intent on dropping the circumcision barrier that when he argued with fellow Jesus followers over this issue, his sense of brotherly love sometimes deserted him. In his letter to the Galatians, he expressed the wish that those who preached mandatory circumcision would “castrate themselves!”

There is little doubt about Paul’s strategic wisdom. Many religions of the day, including some of the Greco-Roman “mystery religions,” were open to people of varied ethnicities. But these movements tended to have hurdles to membership, including financial ones, such as priests who charged initiation fees. Christian churches enjoyed a competitive edge by having no such financial barriers, and Paul kept the edge sharp by making sure these barriers weren’t replaced by others.

But even as Paul diluted the role of Jewish ritual in his variant of the Jesus movement, he had no desire to sever the movement from Judaism. According to the book of Acts, when he came to a city and set out to recruit people, he sometimes started his preaching at the local synagogue. Indeed, according to Acts, some of Paul’s most important early recruits

were Jews. And, even as Paul chafed at the rejection of his doctrines by some Jews within the Jesus movement (to say nothing of Jews outside the Jesus movement), he continued to seek rapprochement, hoping to preserve a broad base. So an interethnic symbiosis persisted and colored Paul’s writing. Hence the phrase *neither Greek nor Jew*, with its enduring connotations of ethnic egalitarianism.

Other features of Paul’s business model pushed even more powerfully toward interethnic bonding. They revolve around the traits Paul sought in his most important recruits, whether Jews or Gentiles, and his strategy of recruitment. And they explain how he wound up preaching not just interethnic tolerance or even amity, but interethnic brotherhood, interethnic *love*.

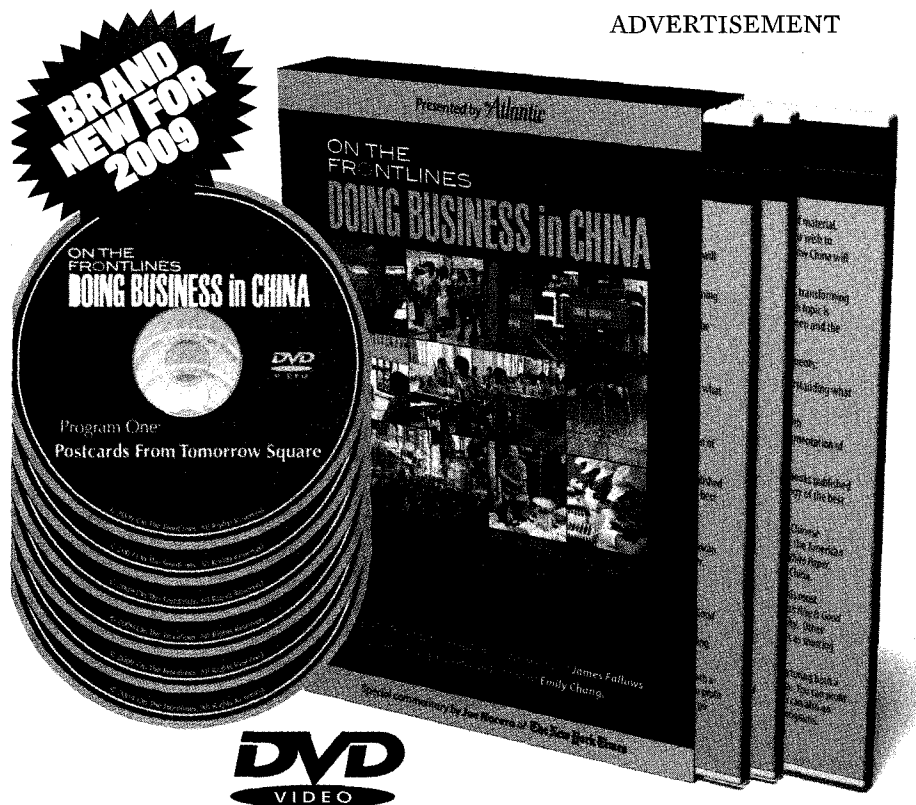
FLYING BUSINESS CLASS

In ancient times, as now, one prerequisite for setting up a franchising operation was finding people to run the franchises. Not just anyone would do. Christianity is famous for welcoming the poor and powerless into its congregations, but to *run* the congregations, Paul needed people of higher social position. For one thing, these people needed to provide a meeting place. Though historians speak of early “churches” in various cities, there seem to have been no buildings dedicated to Christian worship. Borrowed homes and meeting halls were the initial infrastructure. The book of Acts suggests that Paul’s founding of Christian congregations depended heavily on, as Wayne Meeks put it in *The First Urban Christians*, “the patronage of officials and well-to-do householders.”

There is a telling episode from Paul’s ministry in Philippi, a city in the Roman province of Macedonia. Paul and his companions start speaking with women gathered at a river outside the city’s gates. Acts reports: “A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God [that is, a Jew], was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The LORD opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul.” Lydia—the first known European convert to what would later be called Christianity—began her service to the church by recruiting her “household,” which almost certainly included not just her family, but servants and maybe slaves. And her service didn’t end there. The author of Acts writes, “When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the LORD, come and stay at my home.’ And she prevailed upon us.” Then, apparently, they prevailed upon her; Lydia’s home became the meeting place of the local Christian congregation.

To find people like Lydia, Paul had to move in relatively affluent circles. The “purple cloth” Lydia sold was a pricey fabric, made with a rare dye. Her clientele was wealthy, and she had the resources to have traveled to Macedonia from her home in Asia Minor. She was the ancient equivalent of someone who today makes a transatlantic or transpacific flight in business class.

From Paul’s point of view, the advantage of preaching to business class went beyond the fact that people who fly business class have resources. There’s also the fact that people who fly, fly—that is, they’re in motion. To judge by the book of Acts, many of Paul’s early Christian associates were, like



If you plan on having a career in the 21st century, *On the Frontlines: Doing Business in China* is indispensable. This new resource lets you see and hear the business culture of China in action.

Showcasing both sides of important issues, it's what businesspeople and policy makers need to make their own decisions and judgments on China.

■ **JAMES FALLOWS IS THE PREEMINENT U.S. JOURNALIST IN CHINA.** Now he teams up with *On the Frontlines* to explore China on video, capturing the essential nuance and gesture that is best revealed on-camera.

■ **THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.** Even in the current economy, 80% of U.S. companies in China report making money; half of those say they are more profitable in China than anywhere else. Furthermore, China is sitting on a huge pile of dollars. Current conditions will only accelerate its acquisition of U.S. companies.

■ **UNFETTERED ACCESS, UNFILTERED INFORMATION.** The latest compact, high-definition cameras gave us access that was never before possible on video. More important, we filmed for three years. Patience pays off. You'll see and hear everyone, from the factory floor to the executive suites. There are over 150 interviews, woven into case studies, how-to information, and candid analyses of China's strengths ... and weaknesses.

■ **A FAST-TRACK, DEEP-IMMERSION EXPERIENCE WITHOUT EQUAL.** The unique architecture of these five DVDs allows you a complete experience that varies from six hours to 11 hours of video. That's not counting the resources of the CD-ROM, which can take you as deep as you want to go.

Special Discount for Readers of *The Atlantic*: The fact that you're holding this magazine makes you part of a special group. That's why you will receive this product—sold elsewhere at a retail price of \$199—for just \$149. Be sure to enter **ATL-FALLOWS** in the "Member Code" box on the checkout page.*

chinadoingbusiness.com

The Atlantic announces the creation of the only resource of its kind, about the business culture of its kind: five uncut hours of video and a content-rich

**CHINA
THE OPPORTUNITY
IS NOW**

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO OUTPACE ANY OTHER.



Hosts: *The Atlantic* James Fallows and journalist Emily with analysis by Joe Nocera of *The New York Times*

the Atlantic

* Offer may be withdrawn at any time.

him, travelers. As Meeks has noted, "much of the mission" of establishing and sustaining Christian congregations "was carried out by people who were traveling for other reasons."

There were at least two ways that bodies in motion could be harnessed. First, in an age when there was no public postal service, they could carry letters to distant churches. Second, they might even be able to found distant congregations.

Consider Aquila and Priscilla, husband and wife. According to Acts, when Paul went from Athens to Corinth and first encountered them, they had just moved to Corinth from Rome. Among the things they had in common with Paul was their vocation. "Because he was of the same trade," reports Acts, "he stayed with them, and they worked together." Aquila and Priscilla then became key Pauline missionaries, moving to Ephesus and founding a church in their home.

The trade Paul shared with them, tentmaking, was an opportune profession for someone who wanted to mingle with the commercial class. In those days tents weren't recreational. They were used by affluent travelers to avoid staying in inns, which were prone to vermin and vice. Tents were, in short, standard equipment for those who flew business class. Indeed, tents *were*, in a sense, business class. In making and selling tents, Paul would have been mingling with exactly the kind of people he needed to mingle with.

These people were cosmopolitan. They came from varying ethnicities, they dealt with people of varying ethnicities, and their financial interest thus dictated some tolerance of ethnic difference, some extension of amity across ethnic bounds. These cosmopolitan values were built into the logic of long-distance commerce in the multinational Roman Empire, just as they are built into the logic of long-distance commerce in an age of globalization. When economics draws people of different ethnicities and cultures into mutually beneficial relationships, interethnic and intercultural tolerance often ensue. (How many ethnic slurs are heard in transatlantic business class?) In that sense, a nontrivial part of Paul's work had been done for him by the tenor of the times.

Still, finishing the job—fully exploiting the commercial and moral currents moving across Rome's imperial platform—required meeting the needs of Paul's most important recruits. When people open a local franchise—a McDonald's, a Pizza Hut—they do so because they expect to get something in return. What did people get in return for making their homes Christian franchises? In some cases, no doubt, it was mainly the benefit of the gospel; Lydia presumably found Paul's initial teachings gratifying, and what additional benefits she got—social, economic, whatever—from hosting a church, we'll never know. But as the franchising continued, and the church expanded to more and more cities, it offered new benefits to church leaders.

In particular: reliable lodging. Tents were adequate for overnight stays on the road, but when you reached the big city, nicer accommodations were desirable—especially if you planned to stay awhile and do business. Paul's letters

to Christian congregations often include requests that they extend hospitality to traveling church leaders. Such privileges, as the scholar E. A. Judge put it, were increasingly "extended to the whole household of faith, who [were] accepted on trust, though complete strangers." This extension was a revolution of sorts, since "security and hospitality when traveling had traditionally been the privilege of the powerful." The Roman Empire had made distant travel easier than at any time in history, and Christianity exploited this fact. The young church was, among other things, the Holiday Inn of its day.

But there was at least one big difference. The proprietor of a Holiday Inn isn't inviting lodgers into his or her home. Besides, the credit-card numbers of guests are on record in the event that they should turn out to be bad apples. Ancients who hosted travelers they didn't know personally were being asked to take a bigger risk. And they were more likely to make the effort if they could believe that the lodger was no mere guest but rather a spiritual sibling, a "brother."

Once travelers in the Roman Empire arrived in a city, they needed information and orientation. And in the days before the Internet, the net to plug into was other people. But where to find people willing to provide you with valuable information, show you around town, help you make contact with others in your profession or with possible clients? Well, how about a congregation full of "siblings"—all of whom are more likely to lend a hand if they indeed consider you as such. Paul wrote to the Romans, "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the LORD as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you."

Cenchreae was a seaport near Corinth. Paul was here asking Romans to extend familial love to a Greek, and he was doing so in the process of knitting his imperial organization together. As the scholar Wayne McCready has noted, the early Christian language of familial intimacy not only "underscored the internal cohesion that distinguished the assemblies of early Christians" but also "was applied as a universal principle which transcended local and geographic references and united numerous local communities into a collective whole." Paul's international church built on existing cosmopolitan values of interethnic tolerance and amity, but in offering its international networking services to congregants, the church went beyond those values; a kind of interethnic love was the core value that held the system together.

Even today, religious bonds can play a role in commerce. (The Mormon Church, whose growth rate has been compared to that of early Christianity, has proved to be a smooth conduit of commercial contact.) But in the ancient world, that role was pervasive. Greek and Roman associations that were essentially vocational—associations of shippers or of artisans or whatever—seem never to have been wholly secular. The transactional trust on which business depends—a

**Christianity
is famous for
welcoming
the poor and
powerless into
its congregations,
but to run the
congregations,
Paul needed
people of higher
social position.**

trust that rests today largely on elaborate laws and their reliable enforcement—rested in ancient times partly on laws but largely on faith in the integrity of individual people. And religious fellowship was one of the great foundations of such faith.

It may sound implausible that a doctrine of true, pure, boundless love could emerge from the strategic imperatives of entrepreneurship, even when the enterprise is a religion. And, actually, it *is* implausible. What emerged with early Christianity isn't really what many Christians like to believe: a God of "universal" love. The core appeal of the early church, remember, was that "brotherly love" was a form of familial love. And familial love is discerning—it is directed inwardly, not outwardly; toward kin, not toward everyone.

This is the kind of love Paul usually preaches—love directed first and foremost toward other Christians. "Love one another with mutual affection," he tells the Romans. "Through love become slaves to one another," he instructs members of the Galatian congregation.

This isn't to say that his preachings offer no foundation for a more truly universal love. He often exhorts Christians to extend hospitality to the unconverted, and sometimes he goes further. He tells the Thessalonians, "May the LORD make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all." Still, he isn't in the habit of putting Christians and non-Christians on *quite* the same plane. He tells the Galatians: "Let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith."

Paul is treading a fine line—occasionally urging a kind of "love" for non-Christians, yet suggesting that it be a less powerful motivator for generosity than the "brotherly love" he champions among Christians. Treading this line was a key to Christianity's early success.

On the one hand, Christianity made a name for itself by extending generosity to non-Christians. Some of those it befriended joined the church, and others no doubt spoke highly of it thereafter. Yet Christianity couldn't extend generosity to non-Christians infinitely. After all, it was an organization that wanted to grow, and central among its enticements was

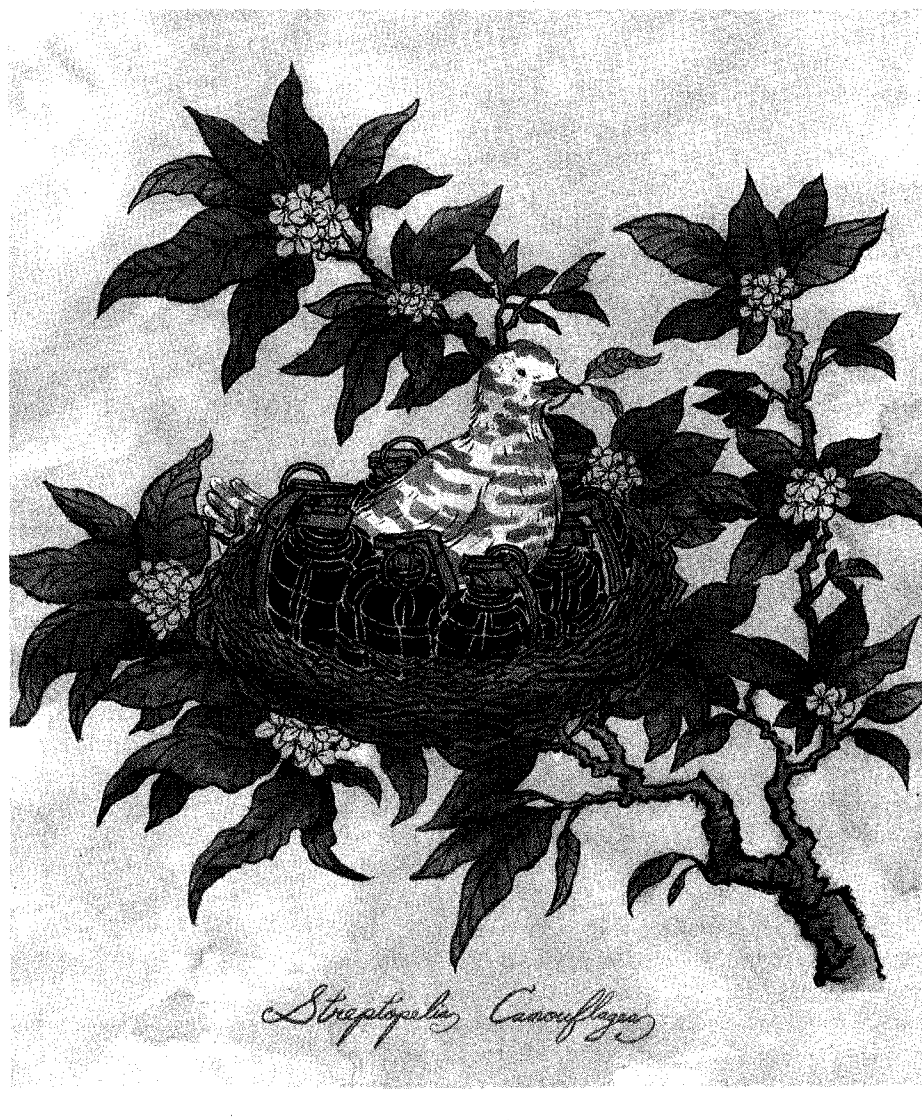
that membership brought the benefits of an extended family, including material assistance in times of need. If anyone could get these things forever without joining, how many people would join?

THOSE PRAGMATIC ABRAHAMICS

However far Paul's Christian love may have been from truly universal, its indifference to ethnic and national bounds is admirable—and, from a modern perspective, encouraging. If an ancient religion adapted to conditions comparable to globalization by expanding people's moral horizons, maybe modern religions can do the same thing. Certainly it would be nice if all Christians, Jews, and Muslims had moral horizons expansive enough to encompass one another.

Auspiciously, the early histories of both Islam and Judaism show them to possess the kind of pragmatic flexibility that ancient Christianity evinced. An imperial environment—a globalizing world, if on a smaller scale—brought out each religion's benign side and subdued its belligerent side.

GALLERY CAMO DOVE by Yuko Shimizu



In the case of ancient Israel, the empire in question was the Persian Empire, which Israel became part of in the sixth century B.C. Previously, Israel's brushes with empires had been largely unpleasant. The Israelites were tormented by the Assyrians and, more famously, by the Babylonians, who forced Israel's elites into exile in 586 B.C. And the Hebrew Bible has the belligerent, xenophobic scriptures to show for these experiences (and for periodic conflicts with smaller states as well). But after the Persians conquered the Babylonians and allowed the exiles to return home, Israel was on the inside, not the outside, of an empire, and a pretty congenial one—an empire that respected its subjects' religious autonomy. Israel's neighbors no longer threatened its security, and it could prosper by staying on good terms with them.

A number of scriptures thought to have been written after the exile seem to reflect the change, depicting a kinder, gentler, more internationalist God. In the book of Jonah, which most scholars consider post-exilic, God showers compassionate forgiveness on sinners in the faraway city of Nineveh. Jonah (after spending some time inside a giant fish) laments God's compassion—not surprisingly, given that Nineveh is part of Assyria, Israel's historical persecutor. But after the exile, Nineveh is part of the same empire as Israel, and the author of this narrative has God patiently explain to Jonah that the Ninevites had sinned out of moral confusion. That's quite a change from God's pre-imperial attitude. In the book of Ezekiel, apparently written during the exile, God was proud of having made Assyria suffer “as its wickedness deserves.”

Ruth, another book that is commonly, though less confidently, dated post-exilic, also features fresh international bonding. The book offers up a remarkable revelation: King David had not been ethnically pure. His great-grandmother, Ruth, was not only a foreigner, but a foreigner whose native country had given Israel much trouble: Moab. The book seems to carry something like the message of Paul's Christianity—that God's love knows no ethnic or national bounds, and is available to all who, like “Ruth the Moabite,” choose to worship him. In any event, the contrast with other biblical depictions of the Moabites is undeniable. In scripture written before the exile, their founder, Moab, was said to be a product of incest, born of a drunken sexual encounter between Lot and one of his daughters. Now, post-exile, the Moabites' place in the family tree gets an upgrade: however ignoble their origins, they've gone on to become ancestors of King David himself. What a difference an empire makes!

Empire made a difference in early Islam, too. Of course, the creation of the Islamic Empire, like the creation of the Roman Empire, had hardly been a study in intercultural tolerance. Indeed, the now-infamous doctrine of jihad seems to have emerged as an Islamic legal concept in the mid-seventh century, after the death of Muhammad, as a way of smoothing the creation of an empire through conquest. In the strong

version of the doctrine, which crystallized decades later, the world is divided between the “House of Islam” and the “House of War.” The House of War is the part of the world still laboring under unbelief even though Islamic doctrine has reached it. It is called the House of War because the duty of Islam's leader is to fight there.

But once the fighting is done, a leader's perspective can change. Though making all the world the “House of Islam” would seem to imply turning everyone you subjugate into a Muslim, that goal, if it was ever a part of jihad, didn't stay one for long. The more unbelievers you rule, the clearer it becomes that their ongoing antagonism won't be an asset, and the bleaker is the prospect of incurring their wrath by coercing them into conversion. Once you've got an empire to run, the less friction within it, the better.

The solution was simple. The empire's rulers decided that it was okay for Christians and Jews to remain Christians and Jews, so long as they paid a special tax. (At one point conversion to Islam was *banned*, lest tax revenues fall.) There was nothing radical about this. Ancient empires typically demanded tribute from the conquered. Besides, the Koran's description of Christians and Jews as “People of the Book”—adherents of Abrahamic scripture, like Muslims—seemed to provide a basis for tolerance.

But what about Zoroastrians, who came under Muslim rule with the conquest of Persia? Zoroastrians didn't have scriptures devoted to the Abrahamic God—and so weren't in any clear sense “People of the Book.” But, hey, the Zoroastrians did have a book of scripture—the Avesta—so they were in *some* sense People of the Book, or at least, People of a Book. So they could be tolerated, too! Later, as Muslim conquests spread deeply into Asia, the conquerors found a way to extend this basic idea—taxes in exchange

for toleration—to Buddhists and Hindus. Muslim rulers in Africa decided that there, too, polytheists could be tolerated.

And, just as Christians asserted that Jesus had said things conducive to cohesion on an imperial platform, Muslims dug up some helpful utterances from Muhammad. For example: “There is no compulsion in religion.”

This saying may well be accurate. It comes from the Koran, which seems to be a more reliable guide to the real Muhammad than the Gospels are to the real Jesus, and it jibes with the fact that tolerance was often in Muhammad's strategic interest. Thus do Koranic attitudes toward Christians and Jews swing from belligerent to friendly. Indeed, more than once, Muhammad says that Jews and Christians are eligible for salvation. (At one point—by some interpretations, at least—he even seems to leave open the prospect of salvation for polytheists.)

But the hadith—sayings of the Prophet Muhammad as recalled in the oral tradition—remained fluid long after the Koran had congealed, so some parts of the hadith that are invoked to support tolerance fall in the “suspiciously convenient” category. For example: “If they convert to Islam it is

However far Paul's Christian love may have been from truly universal, its indifference to ethnic and national bounds is admirable—and, from a modern perspective, encouraging.

well; if not, they remain [in their previous religion]; indeed Islam is wide.”

The hadith also came to the aid of an Islamic scholar who, more than a millennium ago, de-emphasized holy war by calling it the “lesser jihad” and said, “The greater jihad is the struggle against the self.” These two different meanings of *jihad* are consistent with the diverse uses of the term in the Koran, but on what basis could anyone say which was greater? Reportedly, Muhammad had himself told Muslims returning from war, “You have returned from the lesser jihad to the greater jihad.” This account was late to surface, but better late than never.

GETTING TO NON-ZERO

For all three Abrahamic faiths, then, tolerance and even amity across ethnic and national bounds have a way of emerging as a product of utility; when you can do well by doing good, doing good can acquire a scriptural foundation. This flexibility is heartening for those who believe that, in a highly globalized and interdependent world, the vast majority of people in all three Abrahamic faiths have more to gain through peaceful coexistence and cooperation than through intolerance and violence. If ancient Abrahamics could pen laudable scriptures that were in their enlightened self-interest, then maybe modern Abrahamics can choose to emphasize those same scriptures when it’s in *their* interest.

And if some people find it dispiriting that moral good should emerge from self-interest, maybe they should think again. At least, the Abrahamics among them should think again. The Hebrew Bible, considered a holy text by all three Abrahamic faiths, sees the pragmatic value of virtue as itself part of divine design.

This theme emerges in various parts of the “wisdom literature” of the ancient Middle East, notably the biblical book of Proverbs. Proverbs announces at its outset that it aims to impart a sense of “integrity, justice, and honesty.” Yet the very next verse shifts into self-help, promising that the book will “teach shrewdness to the simple” and “prudence to the young.” In the logic of the wisdom literature, there is no great gap here. You learn virtue by learning the *wisdom* of virtue—learning that virtue is in your self-interest. And it’s part of God’s plan; the world is designed to translate self-interest into moral good via wisdom. In Proverbs the personification of wisdom, Lady Wisdom, says, “The LORD created me at the beginning of his work.” When God “drew a circle on the face of the deep ... when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master worker.”

Of course, the fact that ancient scripture sees the link between prudence and virtue as a reflection of divine purpose doesn’t make it so. But if, as a matter of fact, the prudent pursuit of self-interest *has* over time led humanity closer to a moral truth—namely, that people of all ethnicities and faiths deserve respect—that lends at least some heft to the argument that there is a larger purpose in human affairs.

The scriptures do strengthen this argument—not by asserting it but by corroborating it. In all three Abrahamic religions, amity and tolerance cross national or ethnic bounds when people feel they can gain more through peaceful interaction than through conflict. And the fact is that history

has relentlessly expanded the range across which these dynamics hold.

To put the point more technically: history expands the range of non-zero-sum relationships—relationships in which two parties can both win if they collaborate, or lose if they don’t. Technological evolution (wheels, roads, cuneiform, alphabets, trains, microchips) has placed more and more people in non-zero-sum relationship with more and more other people at greater and greater distances—and often across ethnic, national, and religious bounds.

This seems to be the reason we’ve made moral progress since the days when, according to Plutarch, Aristotle advised Alexander the Great to treat non-Greeks “as though they were plants or animals”—a position that itself was an advance over the days when citizens of a Greek city-state didn’t consider even other Greeks fully human. And even that degree of bigotry was an improvement over the days when the scope of non-zero-sumness, and of amity, didn’t go much beyond a hunter-gatherer village.

Globalization is the culmination of this trend, and it features so many non-zero-sum filaments that we lose sight of them. When you buy a car, you’re playing one of the most complex non-zero-sum games in history: you pay a tiny fraction of the wages of thousands of workers on various continents, and they, in turn, make you a car. Or, to take a more pertinent example: “the Muslim world” and “the West” are playing a non-zero-sum game; their fortunes are positively correlated. If Muslims get less happy with their place in the world, more resentful of their treatment by the West, support for radical Islam will grow, so things will get worse for the West. If, on the other hand, more and more Muslims feel respected by the West and feel they benefit from involvement with it, that will cut support for radical Islam, and Westerners will be more secure from terrorism.

None of this guarantees moral progress. People often fail to play non-zero-sum games wisely (and often fail to perceive the non-zero-sumness—their interdependence—in the first place). The world is full of conflicts that illustrate this fact. Indeed, the outcome of the global project is sufficiently in doubt as to suggest that, if there is some overarching purpose to history, it isn’t ultimately to ensure moral progress, but rather to give our species the choice of either making moral progress or paying the price; either people of different faiths, ethnicities, and nationalities get better at seeing the perspective of one another, and acknowledging the moral worth of one another, or chaos ensues.

If you trust the end-time scenarios laid out in any of the three Abrahamic scriptures, you can rest assured that there will eventually be, in one sense or another, a happy ending. But even for nonbelievers, the scriptures carry a modestly reassuring message, at least when read in light of the social and political circumstances that shaped them: people are capable of expanding tolerance and understanding in response to facts on the ground; and even mandates from heaven can change in response. ▀

Robert Wright, a senior fellow at the New America Foundation, is the author of *The Evolution of God*, from which this has been adapted. Copyright © 2009 by Robert Wright. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown and Company. All rights reserved.

Idle factories, moored container ships, widespread bankruptcies, massive migration back to the hinterlands, strangely clean air—the signs of depression are everywhere in China. Because it makes so many of the goods the world isn't buying now, China stands to be worse hit than the rest of the world—just as America was during the Depression, when it was the world's sweatshop. But like America then, China will use tough times to design innovative products that will get it the high profits and the high-value jobs Americans kept to themselves for decades. And that is very bad news for the United States, unless it uses tough times to reinvent itself, too.

INTERESTING TIMES

By James Fallows

OUR APARTMENT IN Beijing overlooks one of the city's long-distance bus terminals, where people arrive from the countryside to find work or sell wares, and depart for visits or permanent returns to their home villages. Early last summer, the terminal was jammed, and most of the passengers were leaving town.

At the time, the outbound flow was taken as one more last-minute sign of China's optimistic, all-fronts effort to spiff up Beijing for its role as Olympic host. Through the spring, construction workers had toiled round the clock on any building or public-works project (notably, new subway stations) that had a chance of being completed by the time of the Games. For projects with no hope of making the deadline, workers toiled instead to put up screening walls, or to neaten the piles of I-beams and rebar that normally littered the sites. In July the government ordered a halt to all building or demolition work anywhere near Beijing, as part of a security lockdown and in hopes that construction dust would settle out of the air. The workers, mostly migrants from poorer neighboring provinces, went home on (mostly unpaid) leave to see their families and watch the Games on village TVs.

In September, as Olympic spectators were leaving Beijing, migrant workers returned, via packed buses and trains. In the capital as in fast-growing cities all across China, country people stand out in the urban crowd. Their hands and faces are more weathered, their clothes simpler and more ragged. Often they move about town lugging unwieldy bundles of bedding and belongings wrapped in the plaid-patterned, woven-plastic fabric that somehow has become standard for such purposes in poor countries around the world.

NATALIE BEHRING / AURORA PHOTOS



This post-Olympic flow back into the city was expected—but what happened next was not. In mid-October, at about the time retail sales were collapsing in the United States, we started seeing extra buses muster each morning with full loads of migrants headed out of town again. On an icy afternoon in November, I passed a site where a huge new office complex was being built. Its towering construction cranes, which just a week earlier had been swinging loads of cement and steel so close to the sidewalk that passersby ducked, were motionless. The frontage road was lined with buses whose license plates were from Hebei province—the sticks. A driver told me that the convoy would take workers back to their home village—“For now, no work”—and then come back for another load as soon as it dropped this batch off.

Through the rest of the winter and early this spring, Beijing’s air stayed notably clearer than it had been at the same time a year ago. Part of that was because of unusually windy weather, and part may have been a residual benefit of Olympic cleanup measures. But it was also a sign that fewer factories were running in the heavy-industrial districts upwind of Beijing.

The outbound buses and the better air were our local indicators of the economic contraction being felt in practically every corner of the world. And there were signs of it everywhere in China. Container ships sitting, moored and idle, in the harbor of Hong Kong. Revenues down in Macau’s casinos. Seas of empty seats aboard a small Airbus on the Shanghai-Beijing shuttle flight. (The first time I took that trip, in 2006, it was aboard a 747 with every seat full.) A report that a million or more of this year’s university graduates were still looking for jobs. Protests across the country, as real-estate developers and small-factory owners went bankrupt—and disappeared without paying employees months of back wages. Thousands of factories in Dongguan, in Guangdong province just north of Hong Kong, had been the real-life incarnation of the world’s stereotype of low-wage Chinese workers turning out low-value goods—cheap dolls and toys, Halloween masks, the bulk of the world’s Christmas presents and decorations. Within months the area was transformed into China’s rust belt.

You never know which statistics to believe in China, but in January a local official in Dongguan told me that at least 1 million factory workers had recently lost their jobs within five miles of where I was, and probably another million in nearby manufacturing areas of Guangdong province. The electronics supplier Foxconn, whose gigantic compound in Shenzhen turns out components for Apple, Dell, HP, and countless other companies and which had recently employed more than 250,000 workers, sent all its employees on a one-month unpaid furlough late last year. Reports in the Chinese press said Foxconn might lay off 100,000 worldwide.

IS THE “CHINA STORY” as we’ve known it—the three-decade-long story of modernization and prosperity supervised by an authoritarian regime whose economic success excuses most complaints and failings—over? Has it reached its limits and exposed its contradictions? If China does not keep moving forward and growing, will it tear itself apart?

Observers outside China often compare its difficulties to Japan’s a generation earlier. Few people inside China think the two economies have much in common—one is full of impoverished peasants, while the other has practically eliminated poverty; one is rushing toward industrialization while the other has been an industrial power for more than a century. But in recent months, I’ve heard countless Americans and a few Europeans ask, “Isn’t this just like the ‘Japan scare’ of the 1980s?” The question is shorthand for saying: “Japan seemed unstoppable 20 years ago and has been a sick man ever since. Is ‘rising’ China perhaps due for a similar reassessment?”

From Chinese intellectuals and officials I’ve more often heard a cautionary comparison to the old Soviet Union, implying that political control and territorial dominion could be undone by economic failure. By this logic, the Chinese Communist Party has no choice but to keep the country’s business growing as fast as possible, since a steady increase in material welfare is the real basis of the party’s legitimacy. If the economy were ever to stagnate—which is generally understood to mean a growth rate that falls below about 8 percent per year—then a larger share of the Chinese public might register discontent with Communist rule. And then anything could happen. The territorial contrast between the vast old Soviet empire and today’s shrunken Russian state may help explain

the Chinese government’s intransigence about any threat of what it dismisses as “splittism” concerning Tibet, the Muslim region of Xinjiang, or Taiwan.

The Japanese and Soviet comparisons are awkward because of obvious differences from China. At no point in its history did the Soviet Union achieve anything like China’s sustained record of high-speed growth. So the “stagnation” that helped bring the Soviet regime down was in fact real, decades-long economic decline. Japan’s prolonged “sickness” is one most countries would envy: with half as many people as America and one-tenth as many as China, Japan still has the world’s second-largest economy and many of its strongest industrial brands, including the world’s largest carmaker, Toyota. Moreover, both Japan and the Soviet Union at times presented themselves as models of different paths toward modernity. Modern China is a force and a reality, but not a model or an idea that others might replicate. The Chinese system will remain unique. (The one nation that shares its scale, India, does not share its political precepts. No other nation that could build roads, airports, and industrial parks as modern as China’s could impose so repressive a political regime.)

Still, thinking of how previous models might apply to China raises a valid point. The Soviet Union’s political control was finally undone by its economic failures. And the parts of Japan’s system that truly don’t work—mainly the financial markets, which have yet to emerge from a 20-year slump—reflect its difficulty in adjusting to changes in the world economy. So if China’s rise is not undone by the risks that have been evident for years—pollution, water shortage, corruption, the widening rich-poor social gap, safety standards so primitive that on average more than 250 people die *each* day in coal-mine accidents—might China prove vulnerable

MORE ONLINE

For a video discussion with James Fallows about this article, visit www.theatlantic.com/byd.

THEATLANTIC.COM

AMERICAN RED CROSS HUMANITARIAN PRIZE

In partnership with *The Atlantic*, the American Red Cross celebrated the inaugural awarding of its Humanitarian Prize with a recent luncheon in Washington, D.C. The prize honors individuals with extraordinary dedication to improving life in the world's most challenging regions.



Prize recipients Dr. Noam Yifrach & Younis Al Khatib
with Bonnie McElveen-Hunter



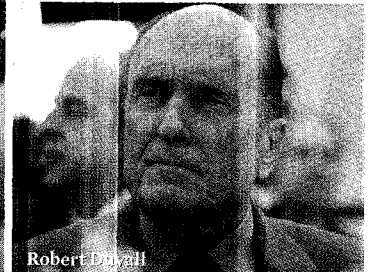
Condoleezza Rice



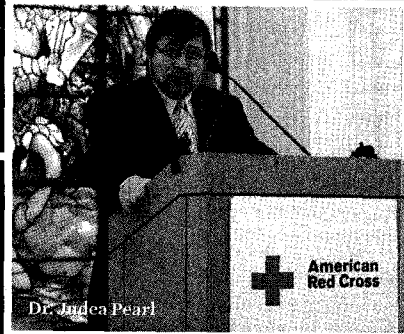
James Bennet &
Ichiro Fujisaki



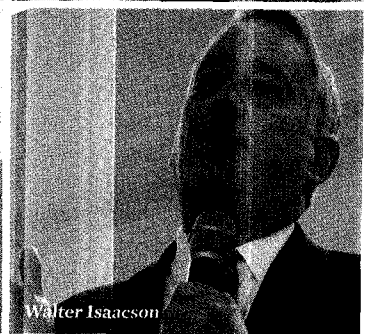
Greta
Van Susteren



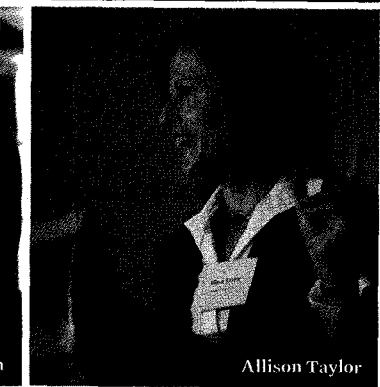
Robert Duvall



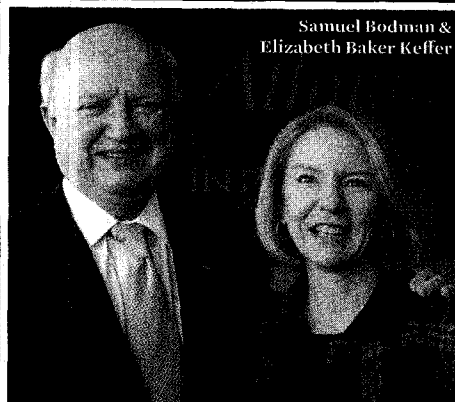
Dr. Judea Pearl



Walter Isaacson



Allison Taylor



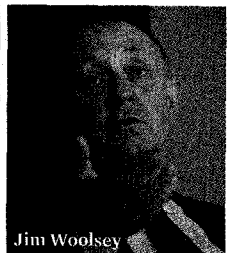
Samuel Bodman &
Elizabeth Baker Kaffer



Joe Turnage & Jay Lauf

S GREEN FORUM

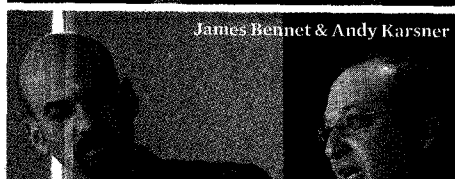
sors
nd Siemens,
dia,
ent to
ironmental
.S. and
ual
e of more
nsiders
an Brown



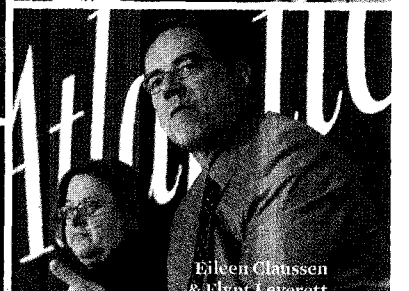
Jim Woolsey



Chad Holliday



James Bennet & Andy Karsner



Eileen Claussen
& T. Lynn Leverett

to Soviet-style discontent born of a slowing economy? Or to Japanese-style inability to understand how the world is changing all around it?

My guess is *No*. China faces big problems, and its modern history has been marked by the unforeseen. Perhaps we will look back at the spectacle and choreography of the Beijing Olympics opening ceremonies as the last time the world thought there was no limit to what China could achieve. But I am betting the other way.

LET'S BEGIN BY considering how bad things could get, for China and those it influences. The clearest approach I've heard to this question comes from Michael Pettis, the Beijing-based finance professor whose side business as a rock-music impresario I described in the *March Atlantic*. To think about China's predicament in the late 2000s, he says, you should think about America's in the 1920s.

Through the early 1900s, the United States played a role in the world economy surprisingly similar to China's in recent years. Until the start of World War I, the United States had long been a "net debtor" country. It had relied on foreign loans and investments to build the factories and lay the railroads that ultimately made it an industrial titan. By the end of World War I, it had become a "net creditor," as its undamaged industrial base supplied European combatants and the former customers of ruined European companies.

In the 1920s, its farms and industries made America the workshop of the world. It ran trade surpluses with most other economies, which meant that a disproportionate share of the world's jobs were in America (it was doing work that other people consumed), and a disproportionate share of what it made went for other people's use. Foreigners paid the difference by transferring gold reserves—John Maynard Keynes complained at the time that the United States was amassing "all the bullion in the world"—or taking on loans and investments from Americans. So far, this is like China's story. And so far, so good.

This very role as global exporter made the United States unusually vulnerable when global demand collapsed in the 1930s. Having had more than its "fair" share of the world's jobs to begin with, America had more of them to lose. This doesn't mean that Americans suffered more deeply than Europeans. We got Franklin Roosevelt; they got Hitler, Stalin, Franco, and Mussolini. But as a matter of plain economics, the layoffs and unemployment of the Depression years were worse in the United States.

That is the problem for China now. Many Americans would assume that China's recent history of trade surpluses would be its bulwark during a recession. In the long run, it will be, because it has provided a \$2 trillion war chest in foreign holdings. But in the short run, China's reliance on foreign customers turns out to be a serious vulnerability.

Pettis wrote recently that China's worldwide trade surplus, "the cleanest measure of overcapacity"—factories that are running and workers who are employed only because

of foreign customers—is by one measure at least as large as America's was in 1929. China today, like America then, has a trade surplus equal to about 0.5 percent of global economic output. But as a proportion of its own economic output, China's trade surplus is much bigger than America's was. In proportional terms, today's China is five times as reliant on foreign customers to create domestic jobs as America was in 1929. So unless China can find a way to keep selling when its customers have stopped buying, it will face a proportionately greater employment shock.

That China might indeed try to keep selling is the concluding part of Pettis's cautionary analogy to the Depression era. As stock markets crashed and economies collapsed, the U.S. trade surplus nearly disappeared. American businesses, desperate to preserve markets and jobs, lobbied for passage of the infamous Smoot-Hawley Tariff, which increased duties on a list of some 20,000 imported goods. Soon afterward, other countries retaliated with similar tariffs; world trade dried up, and the Great Depression was on. When people use the words "Smoot-Hawley" today, they usually mean them as a warning that any interference with trade, especially by the United States, could again prove disastrous.

Pettis's point is different, and in a way more worrisome. The real damage of Smoot-Hawley, he says, was less economic than political. Other countries understood that the United States was trying to protect its trade surplus and therefore its workforce. They didn't like it as a political matter, and they struck back.

If that were to happen again, would it be because of "Buy American" provisions or other forms of American "protectionism" editorial pages so often warn against? That's the wrong thing to worry about, according to this logic. The real counterpart to Smoot-Hawley would be Chinese protectionism—or rather, any effort by China to defend its huge trade surpluses, as the U.S. once did. China's government is unlikely to rely on outright Smoot-Hawley-style tariffs. Instead it could increase subsidies to exporters; it could try to push the RMB's value back down, after three years of letting the currency rise; it could encourage manufacturers to restrain wages; it could impose indirect barriers to imports, as with its recent pressure on China's airlines to cancel outstanding orders for Boeing and

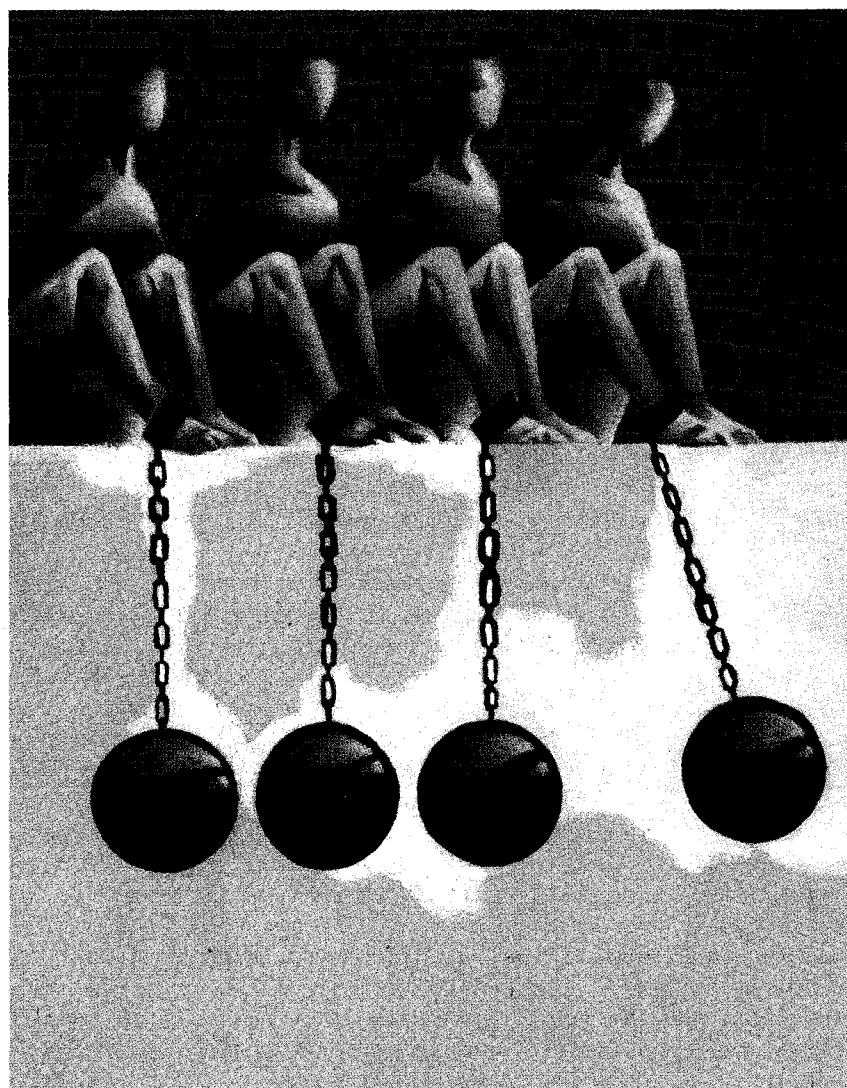
Airbus airplanes. By early this year, China's government was in fact doing every one of these things. As a result its global trade surplus, instead of shrinking as expected when the world economy deteriorated, grew dramatically. Exports fell, but imports fell much more: in January, exports declined by 17 percent and imports by more than twice as much—by 43 percent. This is an economic problem for other countries. But it could be an even more serious political provocation, if China is seen as forcing its share of unemployment problems onto everyone else. And thus, to bring this scenario to a close, the best China can expect from today's shocks might be unemployment rates higher than America's in the '30s. The worst would be for China to start a trade war that makes things even harder for itself.

The best China can expect from today's shocks might be unemployment rates higher than America's in the '30s.

China's emergence as America's financier has steadily increased its leverage over the United States. But in the short run—rather, for however long the current crisis lasts—the two countries really are codependent in a way neither fully anticipated. Early this year, Chinese officials began saying more and more bluntly what Gao Xiqing, who manages some \$200 billion of Chinese holdings in the United States, conveyed artfully in an interview in our pages in December 2008: that if America wants to keep using China's money, it had better put its economy back on track. It should be saving and investing more, borrowing and consuming less. At the Davos conference in January, Premier Wen Jiabao made the point by outright scolding America for dragging down everyone with its excesses.

Okay already! But the more Americans obey these orders, the worse things look for China in the short run, since American overconsumption is exactly what has kept those Chinese factories a-hum. Americans are in a similar bind with their complaints about China. U.S. officials want China to reduce its trade surplus—while also hoping that China's financiers will keep buying U.S. Treasury notes and stocks in U.S. companies with the dollars they get from that very trade surplus. We can't have it both ways. The Chinese can give us money, or they can give us back some jobs, but not both.

GALLERY CHAINGE *by Thomas Fuchs*



SO AMERICA WILL keep looking for the bottom of its economic descent, while Chinese businesses and workers endure a severe blow—one China's leaders can't really change by lecturing Americans. Why do I think the Chinese have good reasons for hope?

One answer lies in the realm of straight economics. Some of the lost demand is sure to be picked up within China itself, thanks to a stimulus plan that, at some 4 trillion RMB (about \$600 billion), is proportionately much larger than the one proposed by the Obama administration, because the Chinese economy is so much smaller than America's. Yes, there are grounds for skepticism about the Chinese plan. Some of the total represents a new label for projects already approved or begun. Some of the 4 trillion RMB is supposed to come not from the central government but from local and provincial authorities, who have no obvious way to raise it during a recession. Although one important element will be basic health-care coverage for average Chinese citizens, most of the money will be spent on construction projects,

especially for transportation and infrastructure: more highways, an expanded high-speed railroad system, scores of new airports all across the country. Construction is the Chinese government's first response to most problems—if it is worried that its universities are weak by international standards, it approves a plan to build new research centers—and the construction projects are subject to insider deals and kickbacks like those in most of the world. But laying concrete and raising girders employs a lot of people, especially the way those tasks are done in China, so this will be an option for some of the migrant workers now being sent home from factories.

Heaped on my desk are other sector-by-sector analyses suggesting that the rebound may come more quickly than the gross-demand figures indicate. "When can we expect to see signs of life in the mainland economy?" asked Andy Rothman, of CLSA Asia-Pacific Markets, in one such report, about the cement and steel industries. "Our answer is, March or April 2009," when the first orders from the stimulus program will reach steel and cement companies.

As in America, real-estate values have fallen throughout China; but China's bad-loan problem is nothing like America's subprime-loan disaster. America's banks have too little money. China's have a lot, and the main reason they have not been lending is that until very recently the government was more worried about inflation than anything else. "Chinese banks are not only very liquid, they will lend when directed by the Party, which appoints all senior bankers," Rothman wrote. They are being so directed now.

I have a lot more reports from a lot more sectors, but all lead toward the same conclusion: China's economy may suffer more than most others, but it also has more tools and resources in reserve than most others.

Beyond straight economics, the "China is over" hypothesis seems to miss important cultural and political realities. Its unspoken premise is that average Chinese people just barely tolerate the social bargain the government now offers—limited freedom, potentially unlimited wealth. So if the regime ever falls short on its material promises, the deal will be off and people will rebel.

This does not square with what I have seen. I have often wondered why so many people in different roles and regions in China seem *vivid*. The answer has to be more than contrast with my own blandness. I think it is because being in China today is like being in Western Europe in the 1950s. No one's family story is dull or uneventful. People doing routine jobs have been through great hardships and dramatic swings of fate. Last year I interviewed a party official in Shanxi province who was laying out his regional-development plans. Every 10 or 15 minutes, he would stop and say (through an interpreter), "Do you understand? If it had not been for Deng Xiaoping, I would be behind an ox in a field right now. I would not be sitting here wearing a necktie and talking to a foreigner." Or, "Do you understand how different this is? My mother has *bound feet*!" A scholar I know in Beijing once offhandedly remarked that he had developed self-confidence when learning that he could survive for four years as a teenager on a labor gang during the Cultural Revolution. People in their teens and 20s were not on the labor gangs—kids today!—but they have heard the stories.

Layoffs and stagnant wages? People have seen worse. Last summer my wife and I went through villages in Sichuan province where refugees from earthquakes prepared for the next few years of residence in temporary shelters and tents. Laid-off migrant workers are returning to many of these same villages now. This is terribly hard, but in the same villages, grandparents remember when half the local population starved to death during the famines of Mao's disastrous "Great Leap Forward" in the 1950s.

When my wife and I first visited China in the mid-1980s, most people with paying jobs toiled in big, primitive, inefficient factories for the so-called state-owned enterprises, or SOEs. In one unheated, acres-wide factory in Hangzhou, we saw some 5,000 women attending old-fashioned looms to make hangings and tapestries of traditional Chinese scenes, with no indication that anyone ever bought them. Some SOEs persist—most of the very biggest companies in China, from the oil and telecom firms to the major airlines, are their spin-offs or descendants. But when Deng Xiaoping's economic

reforms began in earnest in the 1990s, the most wasteful SOEs were closed down—eliminating many tens of millions of jobs in just a few years. Chinese social-realist novels set in the 1990s are about people laid off from the SOEs. Those set in the 2000s are about migrant workers—or urban professionals. The SOE recession was a major social strain, but it did not come close to bringing the government down. The Chinese people weathered that downturn—and more significant, so did the system that rules the country. People in China are as demanding as anyone else, and expectations have risen. But it is hard to see why the hardships just ahead will be the ones the Chinese public finds intolerable or that push the system toward Soviet-style collapse.

Westerners who have not traveled in China might be surprised at how outspoken ordinary Chinese people can be. When cars or bicycles collide (often), the parties involved get out to yell at each other and at the cops, and plead their case to the gathering crowd. Workers complain about bosses who have cheated them. Residents complain about the landlord. In Western China my wife and I met families from villages that were being flooded by new dam projects. They showed us around the new quarters they'd been assigned, pointing out the cracks and defects and itemizing the ways it was worse than where they used to live. It all seems normal to an American.

But when people complain, it is usually about those crooked bosses, reporters, mayors, or bureaucrats—not about the system or its rulers. Principled protests against the system and its repression certainly do exist, as with the daring "Charter 08" petition for civil liberties signed by more than 300 intellectuals late last year. But that is not the norm. Ten years ago, when the Asian financial crisis drove China's unemployment rate above 10 percent, demonstrations broke out across the country. "But the laid-off workers were almost always fighting for their rights—unemployment benefits that they believed were stolen by local officials—rather than fighting against the central government policies that led to the job loss," Andy Rothman of CLSA wrote recently. Perhaps these workers are missing the big picture, but for now they generally act as if they expect the national system to protect them against lapses at the local level.

T HERE IS ONE more part of the big picture: the opportunities that today's disruption may be opening for future Chinese growth.

Nearly 30 years ago, during another big worldwide downturn, I went to Silicon Valley and to Detroit for this magazine, to compare the way two different industrial cultures coped with economic hardship. Many of the companies I visited in each place are still with us—GM and Ford in Detroit; Apple, Intel, and HP in Silicon Valley. But quite a few I visited in California have now vanished. (Remember Eagle Computer Company, or Osborne?) We know that the high-tech industry is a source of growth, but—unless you work in it—you can easily forget that it's extremely volatile. Then as now, people in the high-tech business emphasized that even though no one likes being disrupted, the volatility of America's industrial culture is a necessary part of its success. It couldn't produce so many

**IF YOU'RE NOT
THINKING
FORWARD,
YOU'RE MOVING
BACKWARD.**

BusinessWeek moderates dynamic
conversations that move your
business, career, and investments
in the right direction.

FORWARD.

BusinessWeek

new companies with new technologies if it weren't so ruthless at eliminating old ones.

Chinese industry has also been volatile, but in a way that has done less good for China's economy as a whole. The small-business culture of China is one of the few parts of the world where Americans are considered sluggish and hyper-deliberative. As small companies scramble against each other to cut pennies from costs and minutes from schedules, they have become more nimble as subcontractors. But they still don't keep much of the final rewards for themselves. Thus today's shock is more than such companies can offset just by cutting costs.

In Beijing, in Shanghai, in Shenzhen, and elsewhere, I've recently visited companies that are trying to use the disruption of this moment to enter wholly new markets and do what so few Chinese firms have yet done: make high-tech, high-value products that bring high rewards. In a country as big and chaotic as China, you can find illustrations of any "trend" you want. But in only a few weeks of asking, I found indications of companies that were growing rather than shrinking, and of corporate leaders who were pouring in money based on their belief that now, when competitors are at their weakest and talent and assets could be snapped up cheap, is the time to prepare for their next big advance.

In Shenzhen, north of Hong Kong, I went to see Liam Casey, the Irish entrepreneur I described two years ago as "Mr. China" for his success in matching big, famous foreign companies with small, obscure Chinese factories that can produce brand-name products quickly and well. Casey said that of the top 100 Chinese companies he works with regularly, not one had gone out of business. While many were struggling, some viewed the recession as a chance to move into higher-value work and introduce their own advanced products rather than serving strictly as subcontractors. (Several such items, like new tablet computers and handheld GPS devices, were displayed at the latest Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.)

In a far-southern suburb of Beijing, I visited a new "retail research center" being built by a very large Chinese retail company I agreed not to name. Chinese retailers have at least as many problems as their counterparts overseas. Apart from the global falloff in demand, their customers recognize the difference between modern, efficient operators like Carrefour, Wal-Mart, Best Buy, and IKEA, all well-established in China, and the local department stores that bring a Soviet-era touch to convenience and customer care. Traditional Chinese-owned grocery and department stores can be dirty and dark; at some, you need to queue in one line to choose a product, another to pay, and yet another to show the receipt and pick up your item.

The CEO of one of the antiquated operators spent a week at a major U.S. consumer-goods company and became a convert to the idea that stores should be laid out for the customer's convenience and interest. And with the zeal of a convert, he hired an American hotshot as his adviser and is now building

a research center next to the "corporate learning center" he recently completed. At the learning center, employees take classes on international standards of service, cleanliness, and convenience, and act out drills of how to handle customers. In the new research center, the company will try out different floor plans, displays, and sale offers for its stores, and then see which ones appeal to focus groups of Chinese shoppers. The whole approach could turn out to be a boondoggle. But the American adviser, who showed me around, had moved his young family to Beijing because he believed the company was sincere about learning to meet the likes of Carrefour on their own terms.

At the far-opposite end of Greater Beijing, in a special government-sponsored research park, I visited the China Research Lab of IBM. The lab's director, Thomas Li, has a life story like those I have heard at many successful tech and manufacturing companies. He was raised in Taiwan, by parents who had grown up on the mainland. He went to America for his doctorate, had a successful career with a U.S. firm—

and then decided, for reasons of opportunity and sentiment, to be part of everything going on in mainland China. In 2002 Li moved with his family to Beijing, where he directs a 200-person team of mainly Chinese-trained computer scientists.

One product demo made me wish I could get out a checkbook on the spot. It addressed two of the real-world problems most difficult for computers to handle: converting spoken language to written text, and converting written text from one language to another. Computers have "done" both of these tasks for years, but they have not done them accurately enough to be worth the bother. Having watched many similar demonstrations, I was startled by this one. My wife and I were the

only native speakers of English in the room. But when each of us spoke into the voice-recognition system, it produced nearly perfect real-time versions of what we said. I had been speaking with deliberate clarity, so as a test I said the following words at fast conversational speed: "I never worry that my apartment is bugged in Beijing, because I figure there aren't that many non-native speakers who can understand high-speed slangy American speech." Those very words, except "slangy" (which had become "slinky"), were on the screen. Hmmm.

Although everyone in Li's lab speaks English, differences in accent can be a barrier in discussions with native speakers. So on video conference calls with their IBM colleagues in Armonk, New York, the Chinese scientists listen to what is said in English—and see a nearly real-time English transcription running across the bottom of the screen, which greatly aids their comprehension. I am sure it is not perfect, but I have seen enough such projects through the decades to be impressed with this one. Based on another demo I saw, it is already mature enough to allow spoken words—from TV, radio, commercials, YouTube—to be indexed and therefore retrieved as accurately as ordinary text. The words could then be translated and searched, in the original language or

The "China is over" hypothesis seems to miss important cultural and political realities. Layoffs and stagnant wages? The Chinese have seen worse.

others, so that video clips, say, would be easy to find by a phrase (“axis of evil”) someone says in them.

Two other projects directly addressed the opportunities created by hard times. One, with the internal working name Pangoo, is meant for the millions of family businesses too big to continue keeping their accounts and records by hand, and too small to afford regular business-management software. It is a suite of business applications—account management, billing, Web design—tailored by Chinese-trained computer scientists for Chinese companies that need to save money. Another allows Chinese companies to minimize power use and other sources of pollution when determining how to time their production schedules and obtain supplies. Other companies in other countries are working toward similar goals. This project impressed me because a fairly autonomous, Chinese-run and -staffed division of a major global company was acting as if today’s economic turmoil was an opportunity.

The most dramatic illustration of a Chinese firm trying to capitalize on this moment occurred in the far-eastern corner of Shenzhen. There, a purely Chinese startup firm called BYD has announced plans that would seem laughable were it not for what the company has already achieved.

In 1987, Wang Chuanfu got his bachelor’s degree in metallurgy from Central South University, in Changsha. Eight years later, in his early 30s, he founded the BYD Company with a cousin and a friend, to specialize in battery development. Seven years after that, in 2002, the company went public on the Hong Kong stock exchange. By 2005, BYD was the leading small-battery company in the world. If you use a cell phone, a digital camera, an iPod, an electric toothbrush, a portable vacuum cleaner, you’re probably using one of its batteries. It employs some 130,000 people at seven main facilities in China. I spent an afternoon touring its Shenzhen works, complete with soccer stadium for employee games, extensive apartment complexes for employees’ families and schools for their children, and gardens with the palm trees that Shenzhen’s tropical climate permits.

“Dr. Wang was trained in material sciences, and our senior leaders are expert in material sciences,” Stella Li, the company’s senior vice president, told me. “We feel that if you understand materials very well, many things are possible.” In particular she meant the development that propelled BYD into international news late last year: its unveiling of the world’s first mass-produced battery-powered hybrid car that could be recharged on normal household current. The new F3DM model, which I drove around a parking lot, can run for at least 60 miles purely on battery power, after which a gasoline engine kicks in. The iron-based battery recharges fully in seven hours; it is said to be good for well over 1,000 charge/recharge cycles, an unusually high number. When I pressed the “gas”—and I was alone in the car, with no minder—I was pushed back in the seat as far as I am with my normal car. The announced retail price for the car is \$22,000—expensive in China, cheap in the U.S. or European market, where no comparable plug-in cars are yet on the market.

Whether BYD will eventually be known only for producing the *first* such electric car (as Osborne Computer was known for producing the first, suitcase-size “portable” in the early 1980s) or instead becomes the leading producer, no one can

tell. When Wang unveiled the car at the Detroit Auto Show a month after I saw it in Shenzhen, much of the U.S. press tittered about mistranslations in the BYD promotional material and the stodginess of the car’s design. “Oh, we can always make the car look better!” Stella Li told me when I asked her about that. “Designing the car, building the car, that is the easy part.” She was being deliberately breezy: she went on to explain the company’s faith that its demonstrated edge in battery technology, plus its engineering skills and “vertically integrated” manufacturing system—it builds almost all of the car’s components itself—will give it a long-term advantage. And against the snickering of the U.S. auto press was Warren Buffett’s purchase of 10 percent of the company, for \$230 million, late last year.

The company’s official goal is to be the biggest automaker in China by 2015, and the biggest in the world by 2025. Wang’s unveiling of the car in Shenzhen coincided with U.S. congressional debate about emergency aid to GM and Chrysler. I asked Wang if he had any tips for the U.S. companies. He is a quiet, nerdy man who seemed to blanch as he heard the question translated. “For 100 years, nothing has changed in Detroit,” he finally said (through the interpreter). “I think they need to reconsider their product lines.”

CHINA IS DOWN. It is not out. This has important implications for America.

If China were truly like the old Soviet Union, the coming mass unemployment might be the shock that finally turned the people against their rulers. If it were truly like Japan, it might spend a decade or two chugging along but not aligning its systems to new international realities. In either case, Americans might feel sorry for China’s still-impoorished masses—but less worried about its competitive challenge.

I suspect that China will be like neither. Most of its people will still be very poor. Most of the jobs they hold—when they have jobs—will still be near the bottom of the global value chain. But they will not, I believe, be in fundamental revolt against the country’s governing system. And the companies they create, manage, and work for will be constantly trying to improve their position on that value chain. Two years ago, after reporting on factories in Shenzhen, I described an economic symbiosis in which Chinese workers assembled many of the world’s products—while inventors, designers, shareholders, and consumers from America or other rich countries got the lion’s share of the financial returns. It is the announced policy of the Chinese government, and of many Chinese companies, to keep more of the rewards in China.

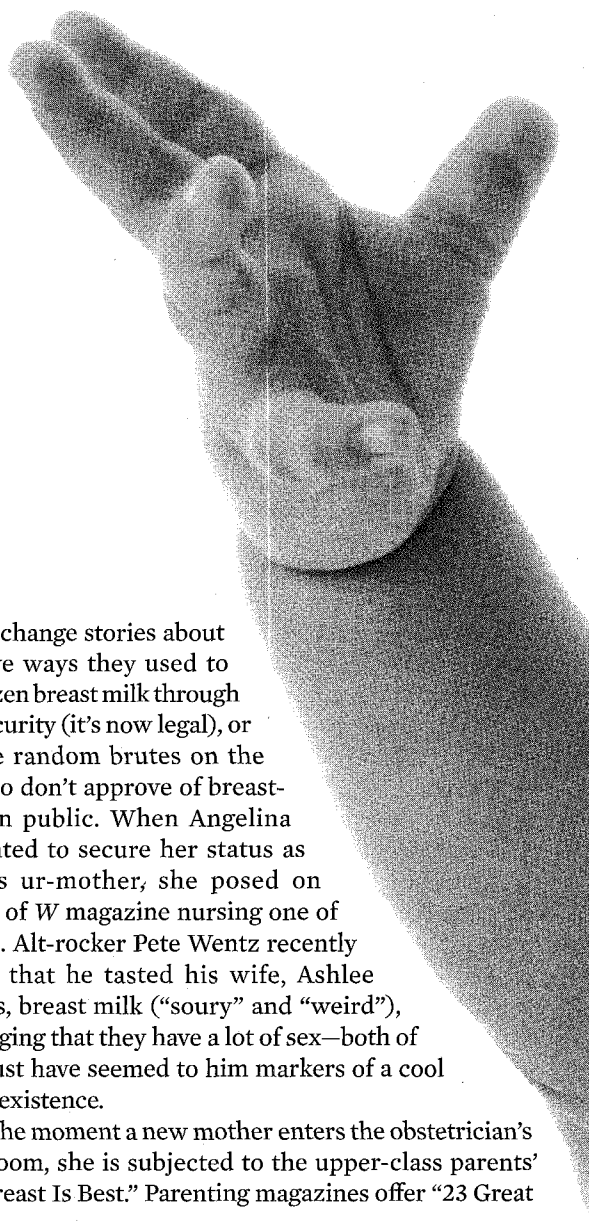
Outsiders can rightly criticize the Chinese government if it tries to sneak in new export subsidies or push the RMB’s value back down. But no one can criticize its ambition to increase the rewards for its people’s work. Many Chinese companies will fail or make mistakes under today’s intense pressure. But many are using the moment to prepare for their next advance. The question for Americans to think about is how we are using the same moment. ■

James Fallows is an Atlantic national correspondent; his blog is at jamesfallows.theatlantic.com.

IN CERTAIN OVERACHIEVING CIRCLES, *breast-feeding is no longer a choice—it's a no-exceptions requirement, the ultimate badge of responsible parenting. Yet the actual health benefits of breast-feeding are surprisingly thin, far thinner than most popular literature indicates. Is breast-feeding right for every family? Or is it this generation's vacuum cleaner—an instrument of misery that mostly just keeps women down?*

THE CASE AGAINST BREAST

By Hanna Rosin



ONE AFTERNOON AT the playground last summer, shortly after the birth of my third child, I made the mistake of idly musing about breast-feeding to a group of new mothers I'd just met. This time around, I said, I was considering cutting it off after a month or so. At this remark, the air of instant friendship we had established cooled into an icy politeness, and the mothers shortly wandered away to chase little Emma or Liam onto the slide. Just to be perverse, over the next few weeks I tried this experiment again several more times. The reaction was always the same: circles were redrawn such that I ended up in the class of mom who, in a pinch, might feed her baby mashed-up Chicken McNuggets.

In my playground set, the urban moms in their tight jeans and oversize sunglasses size each other up using a whole range of signifiers: organic content of snacks, sleekness of stroller, ratio of tasteful wooden toys to plastic. But breast-feeding is the real ticket into the club. My mother friends

love to exchange stories about subversive ways they used to sneak frozen breast milk through airline security (it's now legal), or about the random brutes on the street who don't approve of breast-feeding in public. When Angelina Jolie wanted to secure her status as America's ur-mother, she posed on the cover of *W* magazine nursing one of her twins. Alt-rocker Pete Wentz recently admitted that he tasted his wife, Ashlee Simpson's, breast milk ("soury" and "weird"), after bragging that they have a lot of sex—both of which must have seemed to him markers of a cool domestic existence.

From the moment a new mother enters the obstetrician's waiting room, she is subjected to the upper-class parents' jingle: "Breast Is Best." Parenting magazines offer "23 Great

FEEDING



JOSE LUIS PELAEZ/GETTY IMAGES

Nursing Tips,” warnings on “Nursing Roadblocks,” and advice on how to find your local lactation consultant (note to the childless: yes, this is an actual profession, and it’s thriving). Many of the stories are accompanied by suggestions from the ubiquitous parenting guru Dr. William Sears, whose Web site hosts a comprehensive list of the benefits of mother’s milk. “Brighter Brains” sits at the top: “I.Q. scores averaging seven to ten points higher!” (Sears knows his audience well.) The list then moves on to the dangers averted, from infancy on up: fewer ear infections, allergies, stomach illnesses; lower rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease. Then it adds, for good measure, stool with a “buttermilk-like odor” and “nicer skin”—benefits, in short, “more far-reaching than researchers have even dared to imagine.”

In 2005, *Babytalk* magazine won a National Magazine Award for an article called “You Can Breastfeed.” Given the prestige of the award, I had hoped the article might provide some respite from the relentlessly cheerful tip culture of the parenting magazines, and fill mothers in on the real problems with nursing. Indeed, the article opens with a promisingly realistic vignette, featuring a theoretical “You” cracking under the strain of having to breast-feed around the clock, suffering “crying jags” and cursing at your husband. But fear not, You. The root of the problem is not the sudden realization that your ideal of an equal marriage, with two parents happily taking turns working and raising children, now seems like a farce. It turns out to be quite simple: You just haven’t quite figured out how to fit “Part A into Part B.” Try the “C-hold” with your baby and some “rapid arm movement,” the story suggests. Even Dr. Sears pitches in: “Think ‘fish lips,’” he offers.

In the days after my first child was born, I welcomed such practical advice. I remember the midwife coming to my hospital bed and shifting my arm here, and the baby’s head there, and then everything falling into place. But after three children and 28 months of breast-feeding (and counting), the insistent cheerleading has begun to grate. Buttermilk-like odor? Now Dr. Sears is selling me too hard. I may have put in fewer parenting years than he has, but I do have *some* perspective. And when I look around my daughter’s second-grade class, I can’t seem to pick out the unfortunate ones: “Oh, poor little Sophie, whose mother couldn’t breast-feed. What dim eyes she has. What a sickly pallor. And already sprouting acne!”

I dutifully breast-fed each of my first two children for the full year that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends. I have experienced what the *Babytalk* story calls breast-feeding-induced “maternal nirvana.” This time around, *nirvana* did not describe my state of mind; I was launching a new Web site and I had two other children to care for, and a husband I would occasionally like to talk to. Being stuck at home breast-feeding as he walked out the door for work just made me unreasonably furious, at him and everyone else.

In Betty Friedan’s day, feminists felt shackled to domesticity by the unreasonably high bar for housework, the endless dusting and shopping and pushing the Hoover around—a vacuum cleaner being the obligatory prop for the “happy housewife heroine,” as Friedan sardonically called her. When I looked at the picture on the cover of Sears’s *Breastfeeding Book*—a lady lying down, gently smiling at her baby and *still*

in her robe, although the sun is well up—the scales fell from my eyes: it was not the vacuum that was keeping me and my 21st-century sisters down, but another sucking sound.

Still, despite my stint as the postpartum playground crank, I could not bring myself to stop breast-feeding—too many years of Sears’s conditioning, too many playground spies. So I was left feeling trapped, like many women before me, in the middle-class mother’s prison of vague discontent: surly but too privileged for pity, breast-feeding with one hand while answering the cell phone with the other, and barking at my older kids to get their own organic, 100 percent juice—the modern, multitasking mother’s version of Friedan’s “problem that has no name.”

And in this prison I would have stayed, if not for a chance sighting. One day, while nursing my baby in my pediatrician’s office, I noticed a 2001 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* open to an article about breast-feeding: “Conclusions: There are inconsistent associations among breastfeeding, its duration, and the risk of being overweight in young children.” Inconsistent? There I was, sitting half-naked in public for the tenth time that day, the hundredth time that month, the millionth time in my life—and the associations were *inconsistent*? The seed was planted. That night, I did what any sleep-deprived, slightly paranoid mother of a newborn would do. I called my doctor friend for her password to an online medical library, and then sat up and read dozens of studies examining breast-feeding’s association with allergies, obesity, leukemia, mother-infant bonding, intelligence, and all the Dr. Sears highlights.

After a couple of hours, the basic pattern became obvious: the medical literature looks nothing like the popular literature. It shows that breast-feeding is probably, maybe, a *little* better; but it is far from the stampede of evidence that Sears describes. More like tiny, unsure baby steps: two forward, two back, with much meandering and bumping into walls. A couple of studies will show fewer allergies, and then the next one will turn up no difference. Same with mother-infant bonding, IQ, leukemia, cholesterol, diabetes. Even where consensus is mounting, the meta studies—reviews of existing studies—consistently complain about biases, missing evidence, and other major flaws in study design. “The studies do not demonstrate a universal phenomenon, in which one method is superior to another in all instances,” concluded one of the first, and still one of the broadest, meta studies, in a 1984 issue of *Pediatrics*, “and they do not support making a mother feel that she is doing psychological harm to her child if she is unable or unwilling to breastfeed.” Twenty-five years later, the picture hasn’t changed all that much. So how is it that every mother I know has become a breast-feeding fascist?

LIKE MANY BABIES of my generation, I was never breast-fed. My parents were working-class Israelis, living in Tel Aviv in the ’70s and aspiring to be modern. In the U.S., people were already souring on formula and passing out NO NESTLÉ buttons, but in Israel, Nestlé formula was the latest thing. My mother had already ditched her fussy Turkish coffee for Nescafé (just mix with water), and her younger sister would soon be addicted to NesQuik. Transforming soft, sandy grains from

solid to magic liquid must have seemed like the forward thing to do. Plus, my mom believed her pediatrician when he said that it was important to precisely measure a baby's food intake and stick to a schedule. (To this day she pesters me about whether I'm sure my breast-fed babies are getting enough to eat; the parenting magazines would classify her as "unsupportive" and warn me to stay away.)

Formula grew out of a late-19th-century effort to combat atrocious rates of infant mortality by turning infant feeding into a controlled science. Pediatrics was then a newly minted profession, and for the next century, the men who dominated it would constantly try to get mothers to welcome "enlightenment from the laboratory," writes Ann Hulbert in *Raising America*. But now and again, mothers would fight back. In the U.S., the rebellion against formula began in the late '50s, when a group of moms from the Chicago suburbs got together to form a breast-feeding support group they called La Leche League. They were Catholic mothers, influenced by the Christian Family Movement, who spoke of breast-feeding as "God's plan for mothers and babies." Their role model was the biblical Eve ("Her baby came. The milk came. She nursed her baby," they wrote in their first, pamphlet edition of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, published in 1958).

They took their league's name, La Leche, from a shrine to the Madonna near Jacksonville, Florida, called Nuestra Señora de La Leche y Buen Parto, which loosely translates into "Our Lady of Happy Delivery and Plentiful Milk." A more forthright name was deemed inappropriate: "You didn't mention *breast* in print unless you were talking about Jean Harlow," said co-founder Edwina Froehlich. In their photos, the women of La Leche wear practical pumps and high-neck housewife dresses, buttoned to the top. They saw themselves as a group of women who were "kind of thinking crazy," said co-founder Mary Ann Cahill. "Everything we did was radical."

La Leche League mothers rebelled against the notion of mother as lab assistant, mixing formula for the specimen under her care. Instead, they aimed to "bring mother and baby together again." An illustration in the second edition shows a woman named Eve—looking not unlike Jean Harlow—exposed to the waist and caressing her baby, with no doctor hovering nearby. Over time the group adopted a feminist edge. A 1972 publication rallies mothers to have "confidence in themselves and their sisters rather than passively following the advice of licensed professionals." As one woman wrote in another league publication, "Yes, I want to be liberated! I want to be free! I want to be free to be a woman!"

In 1971, the Boston Women's Health Book Collective published *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, launching a branch of feminism known as the women's-health movement. The authors were more groovy types than the La Leche League moms; they wore slouchy jeans, clogs, and bandanas holding back waist-length hair. But the two movements had something in common; *Our Bodies* also grew out of "frustration and anger"

with a medical establishment that was "condescending, paternalistic, judgmental and non-informative." Teaching women about their own bodies would make them "more self-confident, more autonomous, stronger," the authors wrote. Breasts were not things for men to whistle and wink at; they were made for women to feed their babies in a way that was "sensual and fulfilling." The book also noted, in passing, that breast-feeding could "strengthen the infant's resistance to infection and disease"—an early hint of what would soon become the national obsession with breast milk as liquid vaccine.

PEDIATRICIANS HAVE BEEN scrutinizing breast milk since the late 1800s. But the public didn't pay much attention until an international scandal in the '70s over "killer baby bottles." Studies in South America and Africa showed that babies who were fed formula instead of breast milk were more likely to die. The mothers, it turned out, were using contaminated water or rationing formula because it was so expensive. Still, in the U.S., the whole episode turned breast-feeding advocates and formula makers into Crips and Bloods, and introduced the take-no-prisoners turf war between them that continues to this day.

Some of the magical thinking about breast-feeding stems from a common misconception. Even many doctors believe that breast milk is full of maternal antibodies that get absorbed into the baby's bloodstream, says Sydney Spiesel, a clinical professor of pediatrics at Yale University's School of Medicine. That is how it works for most mammals. But in humans, the process is more pedestrian, and less powerful. A human baby is born with antibodies already in place, having absorbed them from the placenta. Breast milk dumps another layer of antibodies, primarily secretory IgA, directly into the baby's gastrointestinal tract. As the baby is nursing, these extra antibodies provide some added protection against infection, but they never get into the blood.

Since the identification of sIgA, in 1961, labs have hunted for other marvels. Could the oligosaccharides in milk prevent diarrhea? Do the fatty acids boost brain development? The past few decades have turned up many promising leads, hypotheses, and theories, all suggestive and nifty but never confirmed in the lab. Instead, most of the claims about breast-feeding's benefits lean on research conducted outside the lab: comparing one group of infants being breast-fed against another being breast-fed less, or not at all. Thousands of such studies have been published, linking breast-feeding with healthier, happier, smarter children. But they all share one glaring flaw.

An ideal study would randomly divide a group of mothers, tell one half to breast-feed and the other not to, and then measure the outcomes. But researchers cannot ethically tell mothers what to feed their babies. Instead they have to settle for "observational" studies. These simply look for

My friend sat on my couch hooked up to tubes and suctions and a giant deconstructed bra, looking like some fetish ad. Looking nothing like Eve in her natural, feminine state.

differences in two populations, one breast-fed and one not. The problem is, breast-fed infants are typically brought up in very different families from those raised on the bottle. In the U.S., breast-feeding is on the rise—69 percent of mothers initiate the practice at the hospital, and 17 percent nurse exclusively for at least six months. But the numbers are much higher among women who are white, older, and educated; a woman who attended college, for instance, is roughly twice as likely to nurse for six months. Researchers try to factor out all these “confounding variables” that might affect the babies’ health and development. But they still can’t know if they’ve missed some critical factor. “Studies about the benefits of breast-feeding are extremely difficult and complex because of who breast-feeds and who doesn’t,” says Michael Kramer, a highly respected researcher at McGill University. “There have been claims that it prevents everything—cancer, diabetes. A reasonable person would be cautious about every new amazing discovery.”

The study about obesity I saw in my pediatrician’s office that morning is a good example of the complexity of breast-feeding research—and of the pitfalls it contains. Some studies have found a link between nursing and slimmer kids, but they haven’t proved that one causes the other. This study surveyed 2,685 children between the ages of 3 and 5. After adjusting for race, parental education, maternal smoking, and other factors—all of which are thought to affect a child’s risk of obesity—the study found little correlation between breast-

feeding and weight. Instead, the strongest predictor of the child’s weight was the mother’s. Whether obese mothers nursed or used formula, their children were more likely to be heavy. The breast-feeding advocates’ dream—that something in the milk somehow reprograms appetite—is still a long shot.

In the past decade, researchers have come up with ever more elaborate ways to tease out the truth. One 2005 paper focused on 523 sibling pairs who were fed differently, and its results put a big question mark over all the previous research. The economists Eirik Evenhouse and Siobhan Reilly compared rates of diabetes, asthma, and allergies; childhood weight; various measures of mother-child bonding; and levels of intelligence. Almost all the differences turned out to be statistically insignificant. For the most part, the “long-term effects of breast feeding have been overstated,” they wrote.

Nearly all the researchers I talked to pointed me to a series of studies designed by Kramer, published starting in 2001. Kramer followed 17,000 infants born in Belarus throughout their childhoods. He came up with a clever way to randomize his study, at least somewhat, without doing anything unethical. He took mothers who had already started nursing, and then subjected half of them to an intervention strongly encouraging them to nurse exclusively for several months. The intervention worked: many women nursed longer as a result. And extended breast-feeding did reduce the risk of a gastrointestinal infection by 40 percent. This result seems to be consistent with the protection that sIgA provides; in real life, it adds up to about four out of 100 babies having one less incident of diarrhea or vomiting. Kramer also noted some reduction in infant rashes. Otherwise, his studies found very few significant differences: none, for instance, in weight, blood pressure, ear infections, or allergies—some of the most commonly cited benefits in the breast-feeding literature.

Both the Kramer study and the sibling study did turn up one interesting finding: a bump in “cognitive ability” among breast-fed children. But intelligence is tricky to measure, because it’s subjective and affected by so many factors. Other recent studies, particularly those that have factored out the mother’s IQ, have found no difference at all between breast-fed and formula-fed babies. In Kramer’s study, the mean scores varied widely and mysteriously from clinic to clinic. What’s more, the connection he found “could be banal,” he told me—simply the result of “breast-feeding mothers’ interacting more with their babies, rather than of anything in the milk.”

The IQ studies run into the central problem of breast-feeding research: it is impossible to separate a mother’s decision to breast-feed—and everything that goes along with it—from the breast-feeding itself. Even sibling studies can’t get around this problem. With her first child, for instance, a mother may be extra cautious, keeping the neighbor’s germmy brats away and slapping the nurse who gives out the free formula sample. By her third child, she may no longer breast-feed—giving researchers the sibling comparison that they crave—but many other things may have changed as well. Maybe she is now using day care, exposing the baby to more illnesses. Surely she is not noticing that kid No. 2 has the baby’s pacifier in his mouth, or that the cat is sleeping in the crib (trust me on this one). She is also not staring lovingly

FALSE FIRE

The players withdraw in rain,
rattling over the high road.

After a princely welcome,
all hoopla and fol-de-rol,

their shadowy spectacle proved
too much to bear. They pass

the walls without fanfare or thanks,
winding to the south, seaward,

cart wheels sunk in the mud
where Yorick keeps his tongue,

his antics latterly praised,
as grave makes way for grave.

—David Yezzi

*David Yezzi’s most recent collection of poems is Azores (2008).
He is the executive editor of The New Criterion.*

into the baby's eyes all day, singing songs, reading book after infant book, because she has to make sure that the other two kids are not drowning each other in the tub. On paper, the three siblings are equivalent, but their experiences are not.

What does all the evidence add up to? We have clear indications that breast-feeding helps prevent an extra incident of gastrointestinal illness in some kids—an unpleasant few days of diarrhea or vomiting, but rarely life-threatening in developed countries. We have murky correlations with a whole bunch of long-term conditions. The evidence on IQs is intriguing but not all that compelling, and at best suggests a small advantage, perhaps five points; an individual kid's IQ score can vary that much from test to test or day to day. If a child is disadvantaged in other ways, this bump might make a difference. But for the kids in my playground set, the ones whose mothers obsess about breast-feeding, it gets lost in a wash of Baby Einstein videos, piano lessons, and the rest. And in any case, if a breast-feeding mother is miserable, or stressed out, or alienated by nursing, as many women are, if her marriage is under stress and breast-feeding is making things worse, surely that can have a greater effect on a kid's future success than a few IQ points.

So overall, yes, breast is probably best. But not so much better that formula deserves the label of “public health menace,” alongside smoking. Given what we know so far, it seems reasonable to put breast-feeding's health benefits on the plus side of the ledger and other things—modesty, independence, career, sanity—on the minus side, and then tally them up and make a decision. But in this risk-averse age of parenting, that's not how it's done.

IN THE EARLY '90s, a group of researchers got together to revise the American Academy of Pediatrics' policy statement on breast-feeding. They were of the generation that had fought the formula wars, and had lived through the days when maternity wards automatically gave women hormone shots to stop the flow of breast milk. The academy had long encouraged mothers to make “every effort” to nurse their newborns, but the researchers felt the medical evidence justified a stronger statement. Released in 1997, the new policy recommended exclusive breast-feeding for six months, followed by six more months of partial breast-feeding, supplemented with other foods. The National Organization for Women complained that this would tax working mothers, but to no avail. “The fact that the major pediatric group in the country was taking a definitive stance made all the difference,” recalls Lawrence Gartner, a pediatrician and neonatologist at the University of Chicago, and the head of the committee that made the change. “After that, every major organization turned the corner, and the popular media changed radically.”

In 2004, the Department of Health and Human Services launched the National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign. The ads came out just after my second child was born, and were so odious that they nearly caused me to wean him on the spot. One television ad shows two hugely pregnant women in a logrolling contest, with an audience egging them on. “You wouldn't take risks before your baby is born,” reads the caption. “Why start after?” The screen then flashes: “Breastfeed

exclusively for 6 months.” A second spot shows a pregnant woman—this time African American—riding a mechanical bull in a bar while trying to hold on to her huge belly. She falls off the bull and the crowd moans.

To convey the idea that failing to breast-feed is harmful to a baby's health, the print ads show ordinary objects arranged to look like breasts: two dandelions (respiratory illness), two scoops of ice cream with cherries on top (obesity), two otoscopes (ear infections). Plans were made to do another ad showing rubber nipples on top of insulin syringes (suggesting that bottle-feeding causes diabetes), but then someone thought better of it. The whole campaign is so knowing, so dripping with sexual innuendo and condescension, that it brings to mind nothing so much as an episode of *Mad Men*, where Don Draper and the boys break out the whiskey at day's end to toast another victory over the enemy sex.

What's most amazing is how, 50 years after La Leche League's founding, “enlightenment from the laboratory”—judgmental and absolutist—has triumphed again. The seventh edition of *The Womanly Art*, published in 2004, has ballooned to more than 400 pages, and is filled with photographs in place of the original hand drawings. But what's most noticeable is the shift in attitude. Each edition of the book contains new expert testimony about breast milk as an “arsenal against illness.” “The resistance to disease that human milk affords a baby cannot be duplicated in any other way,” the authors scold. The experience of reading the 1958 edition is like talking with your bossy but charming neighbor, who has some motherly advice to share. Reading the latest edition is like being trapped in the office of a doctor who's haranguing you about the choices you make.

In her critique of the awareness campaign, Joan Wolf, a women's-studies professor at Texas A&M University, chalks up the overzealous ads to a new ethic of “total motherhood.” Mothers these days are expected to “optimize every dimension of children's lives,” she writes. Choices are often presented as the mother's selfish desires versus the baby's needs. As an example, Wolf quotes *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, from a section called the “Best-Odds Diet,” which I remember quite well: “Every bite counts. You've got only nine months of meals and snacks with which to give your baby the best possible start in life ... Before you close your mouth on a forkful of food, consider, ‘Is this the best bite I can give my baby?’ If it will benefit your baby, chew away. If it'll only benefit your sweet tooth or appease your appetite put your fork down.” To which any self-respecting pregnant woman should respond: “I am carrying 35 extra pounds and my ankles have swelled to the size of a life raft, and now I would like to eat some coconut-cream pie. So you know what you can do with this damned fork.”

ABOUT SEVEN YEARS ago, I met a woman from Montreal, the sister-in-law of a friend, who was young and healthy and normal in every way, except that she refused to breast-feed her children. She wasn't working at the time. She just felt that breast-feeding would set up an unequal dynamic in her marriage—one in which the mother, who

was responsible for the very sustenance of the infant, would naturally become responsible for everything else as well. At the time, I had only one young child, so I thought she was a kooky Canadian—and selfish and irresponsible. But of course now I know she was right. I recalled her with sisterly love a few months ago, at three in the morning, when I was propped up in bed for the second time that night with my new baby (note the *my*). My husband acknowledged the ripple in the nighttime peace with a grunt, and that's about it. And why should he do more? There's no use in both of us being a wreck in the morning. Nonetheless, it's hard not to seethe.

The Bitch in the House, published in 2002, reframed *The Feminine Mystique* for my generation of mothers. We were raised to expect that co-parenting was an attainable goal. But who were we kidding? Even in the best of marriages, the domestic burden shifts, in incremental, mostly unacknowledged ways, onto the woman. Breast-feeding plays a central role in the shift. In my set, no husband tells his wife that it is her womanly duty to stay home and nurse the child. Instead, both parents together weigh the evidence and then make a rational, informed decision that she should do so. Then other, logical decisions follow: she alone fed the child, so she naturally knows better how to comfort the child, so she is the better judge to pick a school for the child and the better nurse when the child is sick, and so on. Recently, my husband and I noticed that we had reached the age at which friends from high school and college now hold positions of serious power. When we went down the list, we had to work hard to find any women. Where had all our female friends strayed? Why had they disappeared during the years they'd had small children?

The debate about breast-feeding takes place without any reference to its actual context in women's lives. Breast-feeding exclusively is not like taking a prenatal vitamin. It is a serious time commitment that pretty much guarantees that you will not work in any meaningful way. Let's say a baby feeds seven times a day and then a couple more times at night. That's nine times for about a half hour each, which adds up to more than half of a working day, every day, for at least six months. This is why, when people say that breast-feeding is "free," I want to hit them with a two-by-four. It's only free if a woman's time is worth nothing.

That brings us to the subject of pumping. Explain to your employer that while you're away from your baby, "you will need to take breaks throughout the day to pump your milk," suggest the materials from the awareness campaign. Demand a "clean, quiet place" to pump, and a place to store the milk. A clean, quiet place. So peaceful, so spa-like. Leave aside the preposterousness of this advice if you are, say, a waitress or a bus driver. Say you are a newspaper reporter, like I used to be, and deadline is approaching. Your choices are (a) leave your story to go down to the dingy nurse's office and relieve yourself; or (b) grow increasingly panicked and sweaty as your body continues on its merry, milk-factory way, even though the plant shouldn't be operating today and

the pump is about to explode. And then one day, the inevitable will happen. You will be talking to a male colleague and saying to yourself, "Don't think of the baby. Please don't think of the baby." And then the pump *will* explode, and the stigmata will spread down your shirt as you rush into the ladies' room.

This year alone I had two friends whose babies could not breast-feed for one reason or another, so they mostly had to pump. They were both first-time mothers who had written themselves dreamy birth plans involving hot baths followed by hours of intimate nursing. When that didn't work out, they panicked about their babies' missing out on the milky elixir. One of them sat on my couch the other day hooked up to tubes and suction and a giant deconstructed bra, looking like some fetish ad, or a footnote from the Josef Mengele years. Looking as far as humanly possible from Eve in her natural, feminine state.

In his study on breast-feeding and cognitive development, Michael Kramer mentions research on the long-term effects of mother rats' licking and grooming their pups. Maybe, he writes, it's "the physical and/or emotional act of breastfeeding" that might lead to benefits. This is the theory he prefers, he told me, because "it would suggest something the formula companies can't reproduce." No offense to Kramer, who seems like a great guy, but this gets under my skin. If the researchers just want us to lick and groom our pups,

why don't they say so? We can find our own way to do that. In fact, by insisting that milk is some kind of vaccine, they make it less likely that we'll experience nursing primarily as a loving maternal act—"pleasant and relaxing," in the words of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*—and more likely that we'll view it as, well, dispensing medicine.

I continue to breast-feed my new son some of the time—but I don't do it slavishly. When I am out for the day working, or out with friends at night, he can have all the formula he wants, and I won't give it a second thought. I'm not really sure why I don't stop entirely. I know it has nothing to do with the science; I have no grandiose illusions that I'm making him lean and healthy and smart with my milk. Nursing is certainly not pure pleasure, either; often I'm tapping my foot impatiently, waiting for him to finish. I do it partly because I can get away with breast-feeding part-time. I work at home and don't punch a clock, which is not the situation of most women. Had I been more closely tied to a workplace, I would have breast-fed during my maternity leave and then given him formula exclusively, with no guilt.

My best guess is something I can't quite articulate. Breast-feeding does not belong in the realm of facts and hard numbers; it is much too intimate and elemental. It contains all of my awe about motherhood, and also my ambivalence. Right now, even part-time, it's a strain. But I also know that this is probably my last chance to feel warm baby skin up against mine, and one day I will miss it. **A**

Hanna Rosin is an Atlantic contributing editor and the author of *God's Harvard: A Christian College on a Mission to Save America* (2007).



ASPEN IDEAS FESTIVAL

COLORADO

Sponsored by:



Altria



BOEING



ERNST & YOUNG
Quality In Everything We Do



Mercedes-Benz

PHILIPS

sense and simplicity



THOMSON REUTERS

For more information, please visit

Disassembly Line

THE UNBUILDING OF AN AUTO PLANT

By Don Peck

IF YOU'VE FLOWN into Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson airport, you've probably seen the old Ford plant at Hapeville, just northeast of the airfield, bounded by a ribbon of rail tracks on one side and I-75 on another. It extends across 122 acres, and sits so close to the airport that flight-path lights once covered the roof of the massive main assembly plant.

The plant opened in 1947. Ford closed it in October 2006, the second of 14 closures announced earlier that year. Some 2,000 workers lost their jobs as a result of the closing; 500 of them accepted transfers to other plants, the rest took severance. The city of Hapeville, with just 6,000 residents, lost its largest source of municipal revenue.

Closing an auto plant is neither quick nor simple, and for a time, the very process of closure creates its own small economy; ultimately, closures can make way for new beginnings. Immediately after the Hapeville plant was formally idled, about 250 workers returned to begin deconstructing the site; more than two years later, demolition and environmental cleanup are still continuing. Last June, the site was bought for roughly \$40 million by the Jacoby Group, which plans to build a mixed-use development there, eventually creating thousands of jobs.

The Hapeville plant's location is more desirable than that of most auto plants; some factories sit empty for many years after closure, for want of a buyer. Still, the plant's redevelopment is not unique. This annotated map shows the complexity and effort involved in unbuilding such a plant, and offers a best-case scenario for renewal. **A**

ARTIST RENDERING BY BRYAN CHRISTIE

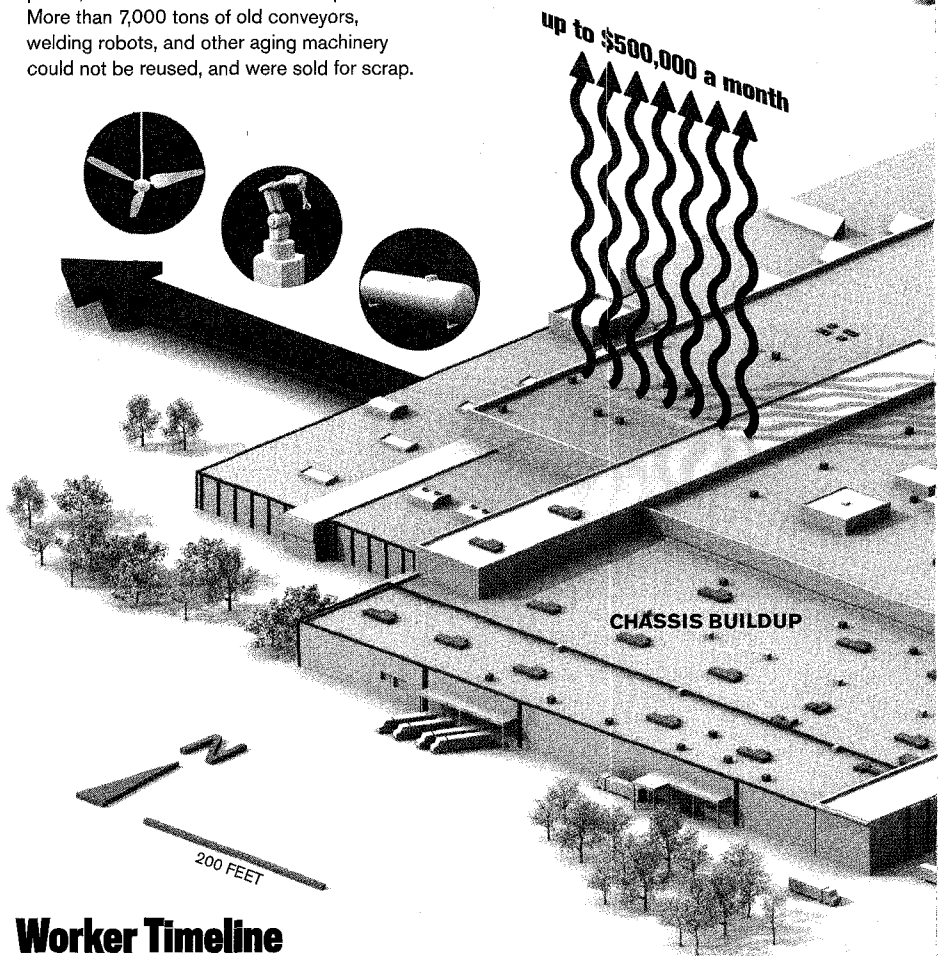
Don Peck is an Atlantic deputy managing editor.

Yard Sale

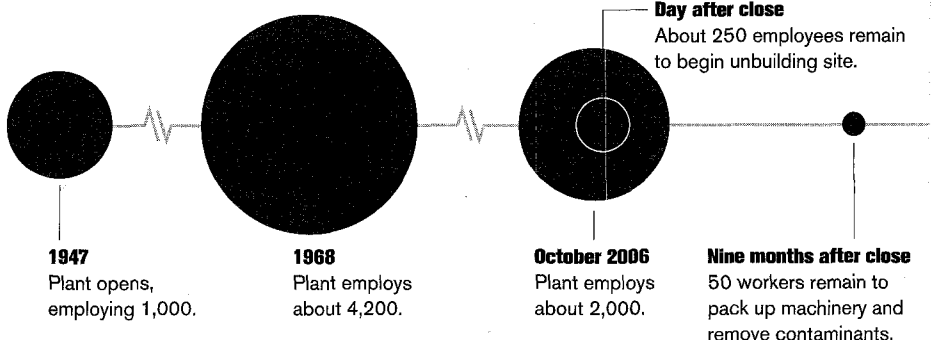
Kawasaki robots, overhead rail systems, Worksman bicycles, 24-foot Big Ass fans: for about nine months, Ford workers disassembled and packed up thousands of pieces of machinery and equipment. Oversize trucks were needed to haul away three 90,000-gallon propane tanks, each 100 feet long. Equipment internally valued at \$26 million was transferred to other Ford plants; the rest was sold to external parties. More than 7,000 tons of old conveyors, welding robots, and other aging machinery could not be reused, and were sold for scrap.

Idle Costs

Closed factories still need to be heated above freezing, so that sprinkler systems will work in case of fire. To conserve heat, workers begin sealing a plant's many vents and exhaust pipes (Hapeville had about 250 of these) soon after closure. Even so, during winter, heating and electric bills in a closed or idled cold-weather plant can run to \$500,000 a month.



Worker Timeline



Cleaning It Up

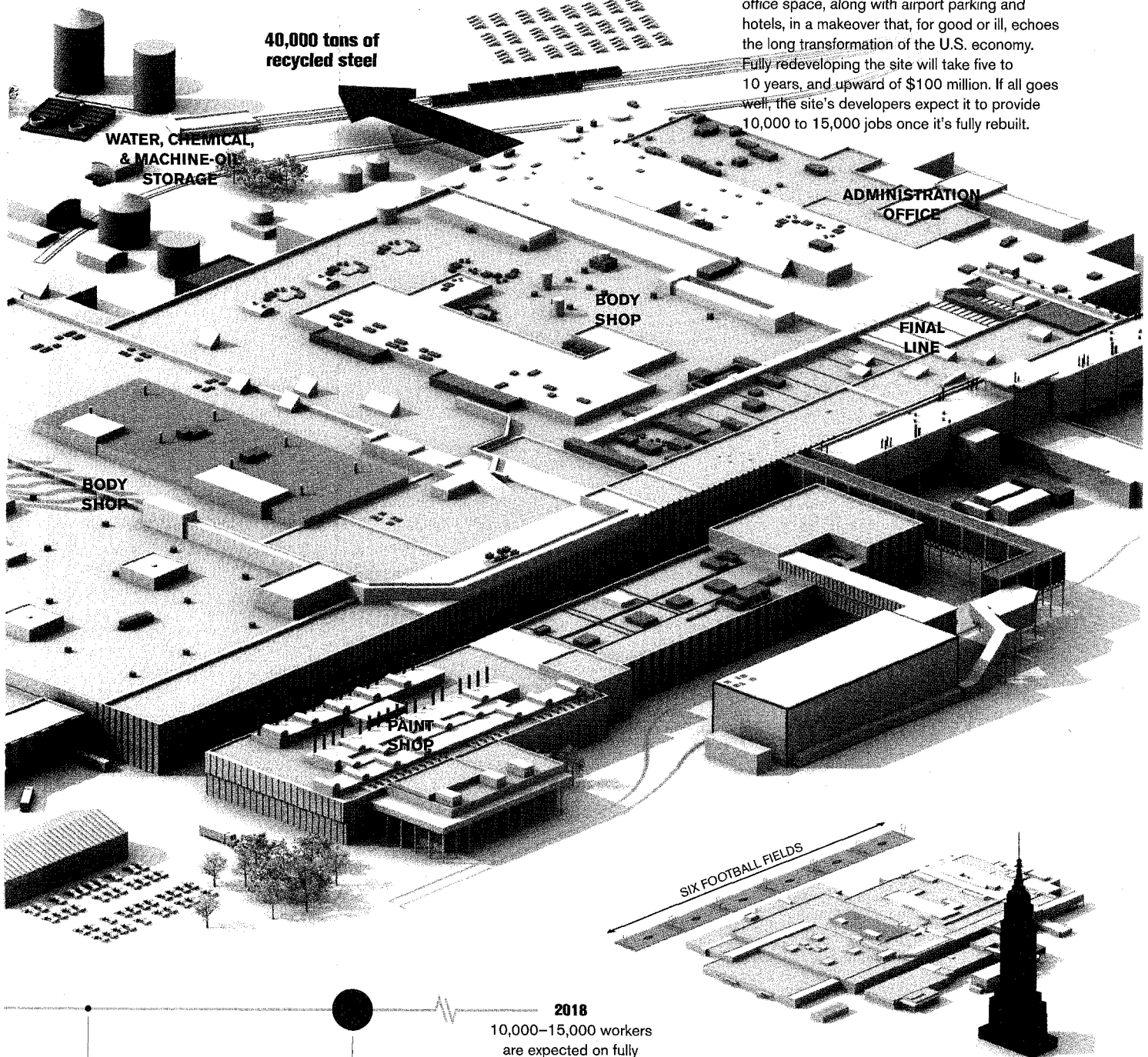
About 50 workers needed four months to "de-sludge" the paint shop, so that no hazards remained. Workers hand-scraped and power-washed up to two inches of paint off the area's equipment and walls, then vacuumed the slurry into tanker trucks. They emptied and cleaned the pit—110 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 20 feet deep—beneath the paint booths. Floor grates were lifted by crane into a special oven filled with molten sand, to burn off paint residue.

Tearing It Down

Upon buying the site in June, the Jacoby Group began a one-year process of tearing down the plant's building shells and ripping up the concrete slabs beneath them. About 60 workers are on-site each day wrecking, sorting, and hauling. All told, they will send about 40,000 tons of steel to local mills for recycling, and break up as much as 100,000 tons of concrete for reuse on-site.

The Coming Aerotropolis

The plant is being turned into a mix of retail and office space, along with airport parking and hotels, in a makeover that, for good or ill, echoes the long transformation of the U.S. economy. Fully redeveloping the site will take five to 10 years, and upward of \$100 million. If all goes well, the site's developers expect it to provide 10,000 to 15,000 jobs once it's fully rebuilt.



May 2008 (just before sale)

A half dozen employees maintain utilities and provide security.

June 2008–June 2009

100–250 people on-site demolish buildings and finish environmental cleanup.

2018

10,000–15,000 workers are expected on fully rebuilt site, according to developers.

**TOTAL SITE AREA:
5.3 MILLION SQUARE FEET,
OR 122 ACRES**

MEET NARENDRA MODI, chief minister of Gujarat and the brightest star in the Hindu-chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party. Under Modi, Gujarat has become an economic dynamo. But he also presided over India's worst communal riots in decades, a 2002 slaughter that left almost 2,000 Muslims dead. Exploiting the insecurities and tensions stoked by India's opening to the world, Modi has turned his state into a stronghold of Hindu extremism, shredding Gandhi's vision of secular coexistence in the process. Now, with his party poised to win national elections, he could be leading India's next government.

PROFILE

INDIA'S NEW FACE

By Robert D. Kaplan

IF THE SPIRIT of modern India has a geographic heartland it is Gujarat, the northwestern state bordering Sindh, in Pakistan. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the mahatma—Sanskrit for “great soul”—was a Gujarati, born in Porbandar, on the Arabian Sea, in 1869. The signal event of the Indian independence movement was the Salt March that Gandhi, joined by thousands, led in March 1930 across Gujarat, from the Sabarmati Ashram 241 miles south to Dandi, on the Gulf of Cambay. There Gandhi picked up a handful of salt on the beach and defied the British law prohibiting the collection or sale of salt by anyone but the colonial authorities. “Next to air and water, salt is perhaps the greatest necessity of life. It is the only condiment of the poor,” Gandhi wrote. In a letter to the viceroy he argued, “I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man’s standpoint. As the independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil.”

Gandhi’s identification with the poor was intrinsic to his universalist philosophy. As he put it:

I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number. It means in its nakedness that in order to achieve the supposed good of 51 per cent the interests of 49 per cent may be, or rather, should be sacrificed. It is a heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity. The only real dignified human doctrine is the greatest good of all.

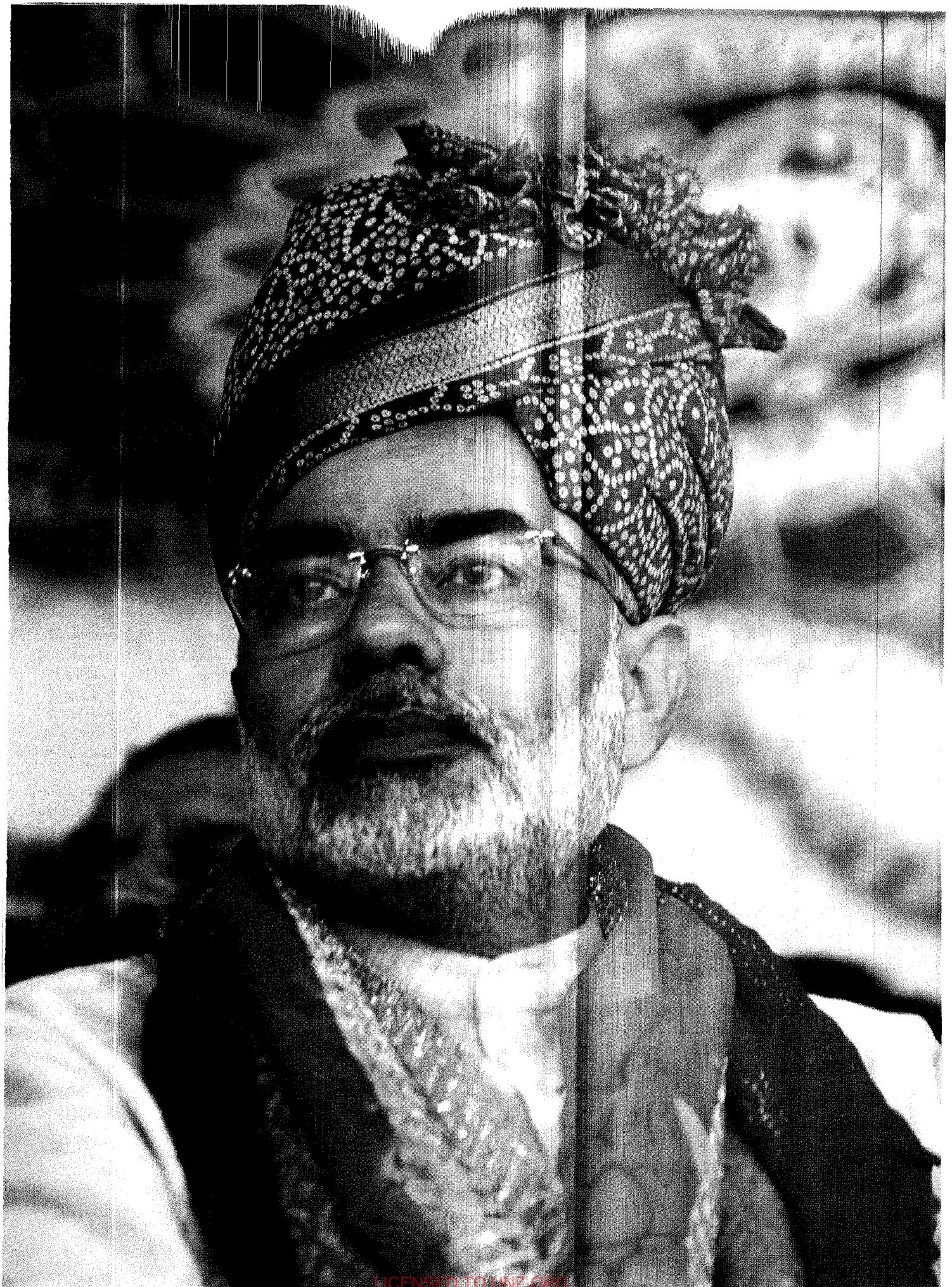
To protect the poor against the ravages of capitalism, which benefits only the majority rather than everyone, India would

adopt socialism after independence. More to the point, although the Hindus would numerically dominate, they could not ignore or trample the rights of tens of millions of Muslims. Indeed, the “greatest good” necessitated that the conscience of the new nation and the ruling Congress Party be avowedly secular.

But the spirit of India has undergone an uneasy shift in this new era of rampant capitalism and of deadly ethnic and religious tensions, which arise partly as violent reactions against exactly the social homogenization that globalization engenders. Gujarat finds itself once again at the heart of what is roiling India, and what singularly menaces the country’s rise to “Great Global Power” status. India is home to 154 million Muslims, the third-largest Muslim population in the world after Indonesia and Pakistan. India has arguably more to lose from extremist Islam than any other country in the world. Yet, as Dwijendra Tripathi, a historian based in Gujarat, lamented to me, “The Hindu-Muslim divide here is worse than at any time since the partition.” Not coincidentally, this rift is deepening even as Gujarat booms economically, with brand-new malls, multiplexes, highways, and private ports transforming it into a pulsing region-state athwart Indian Ocean trade routes.

Gujarat’s heightened religious tensions stem from “2002,” as it is simply called by everybody in Gujarat and the rest of India. In the local lexicon, that year has attained a symbolism perhaps as resilient as the force of “9/11” for Americans. It connotes an atrocity that will not die, a sectarian myth-in-the-making that constitutes a hideous rebuke to Gandhi’s

RAGHU RAJ/MAGNUM PHOTOS



Salt March. And at its epicenter stands another charismatic Gujarati, Narendra Modi, the chief minister of Gujarat, an icon of India's economic growth and development, and a leading force in the Hindu-chauvinist Bharatiya Janata (Indian People's) Party, or BJP.

What local human-rights groups label the "pogrom" began with the incineration of 58 Hindu train passengers on February 27, 2002, in Godhra, a town with a large Muslim population and a stop on the rail journey from Gujarat to Uttar Pradesh, in north-central India. The Muslims who reportedly started the fire had apparently been taunted by other Hindus who had passed through en route to Ayodhya, in Uttar Pradesh, on their way to demonstrate for a Hindu temple to be built on the site of a demolished Mughal mosque. Recently installed as chief minister, Modi decreed February 28 a day of mourning, so that the passengers' funerals could be held in downtown Ahmedabad, Gujarat's largest city. "It was a clear invitation to violence," writes Edward Luce, the *Financial Times* correspondent in India, in his book, *In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India*. "The Muslim quarters of Ahmedabad and other cities in Gujarat turned into death traps as thousands of Hindu militants converged on them." In the midst of the riots, Modi approvingly quoted Newton's third law: "Every action has an equal and opposite reaction." Mobs coalesced and Hindu men raped Muslim women, before pouring kerosene down their throats and the throats of their children, then setting them all on fire. Muslim men were forced to watch the ritualistic killings before they, too, were put to death. More than 400 women were raped; 2,000 people, overwhelmingly Muslim, murdered; and 200,000 more made homeless throughout the state.

The killers were dressed in saffron scarves and khaki shorts, the uniform of the RSS, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (Organization of National Volunteers)—the umbrella group of the Hindu nationalist movement—and came armed with swords and gas cylinders, as well as electoral registers and computer printouts of addresses. The police stood by and observed the killings, and in some cases, according to Human Rights Watch, helped the rioters locate Muslim addresses. As for the 200,000 made homeless, the Gujarati state government provided very little in the way of relief, or compensation for the loss of life and businesses. Today, much of Ahmedabad's Muslim population remains sequestered in squalid relief communities that Modi once called "baby-making factories."

For all its carnage and horrors, 2002 also continues to echo because of Modi's subsequent political success. In a remarkable three terms as chief minister, he has never apologized, has never demonstrated regret of any sort for 2002, and has become a hero to the Hindu nationalist movement. Furthermore, his machine-like efficiency, financial probity, and dynamic leadership of the government bureaucracy have made Gujarat a mecca for development, garnering more internal investment than any other state in India. Migrants, both Hindu and Muslim, from throughout India have been streaming into Gujarat to find work at its expanding factories.

There is an element of Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore in Modi's Gujarat. What's more, Modi's hypnotic oratory and theatrical flair have led some to compare him to Hitler. Certainly he is

the most charismatic Indian political leader to emerge since Indira Gandhi in the 1970s.

Of course, Modi is neither Lee Kuan Yew nor Adolf Hitler. He is what he is, a new kind of hybrid politician—part CEO with prodigious management abilities, part rabble-rouser with a fierce ideological following—who is both impressive and disturbing in his own right. While Barack Obama may give hope to millions in the new century, a leader like Modi demonstrates how the century can also go very wrong when charismatic politicians use modern electoral tactics and technology to create and exploit social divisions, and then pursue their political and economic goals with cold bureaucratic efficiency. And here is why Modi is so important: although he is not his party's standard-bearer going into this spring's national elections, his popularity and influence in the BJP mean that he could one day be governing the world's largest democracy.

AS HINDU IDEOLOGUE and innovative CEO of Company Gujarat, Modi in many ways embodies his state's history: his character testifies to Gujarat's vibrant, outward-looking entrepreneurial spirit and its hard-edged communalism, and his trajectory follows the larger trends that have brought the state, and the country, to this uneasy moment.

Gujarat's vast seaboard—the longest in India—looks westward to the Middle East and Africa, and so Gujarat has been a land of trade and migration. During the age of British imperialism, Gujarati businessmen sold cloth to Yemenis and were paid in silver, which they then lent to English merchants, who bought Yemeni coffee, sold it, and repaid their lenders, so that the Gujarati businessmen made a double profit. In the 19th century, large Gujarati communities sprang up in British East Africa. Later, when America beckoned and loosened its visa restrictions, Gujaratis flooded to its shores, becoming, among other things, motel proprietors and Silicon Valley software tycoons.

Faith—both Hindu and Muslim—underpinned the business networking, providing a social and cultural framework. Thus have two devout, highly distinct ethnic and religious communities operated easily within Gujarat's cosmopolitan framework. Even as the state leads India in electronic governance and indexes of economic freedom, it also has the tightest dietary restrictions; alcohol is prohibited in this land of Gandhi, and vegetarianism (partly the result of the religious influence of the Jains) is widespread. Indeed, Hindus in Gujarat negatively associate meat-eating with the late-medieval Mughals, the Muslim conquerors from Central Asia who were another critical factor shaping the Gujarati historical experience.

Gujarat's post on a frontier zone of the subcontinent exposed the state to repeated Muslim invasions. Some of the worst depredations came at the hands of the Turco-Persian ruler Mahmud of Ghazni, who swept down from eastern Afghanistan and in 1025 destroyed the seaside Hindu temple of Somnath. During a trip to India last fall, whenever I mentioned the events of 2002 to Hindu nationalists, they would lecture me about the crimes of Mahmud of Ghazni. For these Hindus, the past is alive, as if it happened yesterday.



Living history: the Hindu temple at Somnath, one of the most sacred in India, was sacked by a Muslim conqueror in 1025.

This combination of geography and history has made Gujarat fertile ground for *Hindutva* (Hindu-ness) and for the Hindu nationalist movement that first emerged in the 1920s and that has since given birth to a wide range of Hindu organizations, beginning, most notably, in 1925 with the RSS, a vast, volunteer-driven self-help corps. As members of the Hindu nationalist movement such as Vijay Chauthaiwale, a molecular biologist, told me, the RSS provided a “true Hindu voice lost by the pro-Muslim tilt of the Congress Party. Muslims invaded in earlier centuries. They conquered,” he told me. “We lost. The British conquered. We lost. We were a defeated society. We needed to come together as Hindus.”

Narendra Modi, who was born into a middle-caste family in Gujarat in 1950, joined an RSS-inspired student group, going on to become a *pracharak*—a “propagator,” or propagandist—for the RSS itself. Unmarried, the *pracharaks* live sparsely, inspiring hundreds of workers while trying to remain faceless, in an effort to eliminate their own egos. The average *pracharak* serves only two or three years before marrying and resuming a normal life. Modi is unusual. He was a *pracharak* for close to a decade. In 1987, he joined the BJP, which had been founded in 1980 to advance *Hindutva* in the political sphere. One year later, he became the party’s state general secretary.

Modi entered the political arena just as larger forces were propelling the BJP forward. Information technology enabled standardized and ideologized versions of Hinduism and Islam to emerge: just as Shiites became united across

the Middle East, Hindus became united across India, and the same for Sunni Muslims. Meanwhile, the spread of education made people aware of their own histories, supplying them with grievances that they never had before. “The Hindu poor are blissfully ignorant of Mahmud of Ghazni. It is the middle class that now knows this history,” explained one local human-rights worker. That is why Hindu nationalism is strongest not among the poor and uneducated, but among the professional classes: scientists, software engineers, lawyers, and so on. In the eyes of this new, right-wing cadre of middle- and upper-middle-class Hindus, India was a civilization before it was a state, and while the state has had to compromise with minorities, the civilization originally was unpolluted (purely Hindu, that is)—even if the truth is far more complex.

The economic reforms of the 1990s, which brought India truly into the vanguard of globalization, aggravated these Hindu-chauvinistic tendencies. Because the socialistic nation-state of Hindus and Muslims had become a thing of the past, both groups needed a strengthened communal identity to anchor them inside an insipid world civilization. This need has been especially apparent among Gujaratis living overseas: even as successful immigrants in the United States, they have engaged in a search for roots that they have transmitted back to relatives at home.

Against this backdrop, Modi has gone from strength to strength. Promoted in 1995 to become the BJP’s national secretary, he helped orchestrate the party’s rise to power. After

taking over the chief ministership in the wake of a disastrous earthquake, in 2001, he has been reelected twice, becoming Gujarat's longest-serving leader. During his visits to villages, pregnant women regularly touch his feet so that their newborn will be like him. He is so honest that gifts for him are regularly deposited in the state treasury—a far cry from the corruption and nepotism that are so routine in Indian government. Even those Indians who despise Modi's politics acknowledge his skill and power.

MODI'S OFFICE IS on an upper floor of a massive, scabby-faced ministry building in Gandhinagar, the planned city of government workers north of Ahmedabad that is a monument to the flawed architectural schemes of formerly socialist India. Outside his door, Western businessmen and investors in expensive suits clustered after meetings with the chief minister. At 5 p.m. sharp, I was ushered in. Modi sat behind a desk that looked over a long committee table. He wore traditional *pajama* pants and a long, elegant brown kurta—ironically, the traditional dress of India imported by the Mughals. A row of pens lined his pocket. Rimless glasses rested on his face. He had a clipped and distinguished salt-and-pepper beard. His was a handsome, welcoming visage. A small stack of documents lay in front of him. He thrust them at me before I even asked my first question. “I heard you were interested in development here, so here are your answers.” What he gave me was not the usual promotional brochures, but long lists of sourced statistics put together by an aide. Gujarat had experienced 10.2 percent annual GDP growth since 2002. It had eight new universities. In recent years, almost half the new jobs created in India were in Gujarat. The state ranked first in poverty alleviation, first in electricity generation.

Was Modi trying to create another Singapore or Dubai in Gujarat, a place that would be, in a positive sense, distinct from the mother brand of India?, I asked him.

“No,” came the reply. “Singapore and Dubai are city-states. There can be many Singapores and Dubais here. We will have a Singapore in Kutch,” he said, waving his arm dismissively, “and GIFT [Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, a new high-tech city planned nearby] can be like Dubai. Gujarat as a whole will be like South Korea. Global commerce is in our blood,” he added, lifting his eyebrows for emphasis. There was a practiced theatricality about the way he talked. I could see how he moves crowds, or takes over boardrooms. I have met Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and both Bushes. At close range, Modi beats them all in charisma. Whenever he opened his mouth, he suddenly had real, mesmerizing presence.

His ambition seemed grandiose: South Korea is the world's 13th-largest economy. Yet I could understand the comparison. Like Gujarat, South Korea is a vast peninsula open to major sea-lanes. It emerged as an industrialized, middle-class dynamo, not under democratic rule but under the benign authoritarianism of Park Chung Hee in the 1960s

and '70s. I mentioned this to Modi. He said he wasn't interested in talking about politics, just development. Of course, politics represents freedom, and his momentary lack of interest in politics was not accidental. Modi's entire governing style is antidemocratic, albeit quite effective, emphasizing reliance on a lean, stripped-down bureaucracy of which he has taken complete personal control, even as he has pushed his own political party to the sidelines, almost showing contempt for it.

Modi spoke to me in clipped, to-the-point phrases, with a didactic tone, about the cosmopolitan trading history of Gujarat going back 5,000 years, and how Parsis and others had come to its shores and been assimilated into the Hindu culture. I asked him about the contribution of the Muslims, who make up 11 percent of the state's population. “We are a spiritual, god-fearing people,” he answered. “We are by and large vegetarians. Jainism and Buddhism impacted us positively. We want to create a Buddhist temple here to honor

Buddha's remains.” He then prompted me for my next question. He had nothing further to say. His terse responses spoke volumes: Muslims, of course, are meat-eaters.

I asked if he had any regrets about anything he had done or failed to do since becoming chief minister seven years earlier. Again, he had nothing to say. I then asked specifically if he regretted 2002. His answer: “There are so many views about that. Who am I to judge?” He said that a commission would decide about his role in the riots. In fact, a preliminary report by a commission from his own state bureaucracy had already absolved him of any wrongdoing.

“There was no Kalinga effect on Modi,” Hanif Lakdawala, a Muslim who runs a human-rights NGO, told me. He was refer-

ring to a war fought in the third century B.C. by the Mauryan Empire under King Ashoka against the kingdom of Kalinga on the eastern coast of India. Ashoka's forces slew 100,000 civilians. Yet the slaughter left Ashoka with so much guilt that he dedicated his life thereafter to nonviolence and the peaceful development of his empire.

I wondered if Modi felt differently behind closed doors. By all accounts, after the riots, he manically dedicated himself to development, sleeping less than four hours every night, up at 5 a.m. to check his e-mail and read the local papers, visiting about 3,000 of the 7,000 villages in the state, and empowering the lowest reaches of its bureaucracy through his slogan, “Less government, more governance.” As Atul Tandan, director of the Mudra Institute of Communications, in Ahmedabad, told me, “You have to separate Modi's political ideology from his management ability. Because there is not a hint of corruption about him, Modi is effective because people believe his decisions are only results-oriented.” Even many Muslims have come to respect Modi for cracking down on the gambling and criminal rackets that have infested some of their communities.

Nevertheless, there were so many ingenious ways Modi could have shown remorse for what happened in 2002

Today, much of Ahmedabad's Muslim population remains sequestered in squalid relief communities that Modi once called “baby-making factories.”

without directly admitting guilt, and he had expressed no interest in doing so. Perhaps it was a Machiavellian ploy: first, allow RSS forces to launch what most neutral observers said was a methodical killing spree in 2002, and then turn toward development after you have used violence to consolidate power and concentrate the minds of your enemies. But Machiavelli believed in using only the minimum amount of cruelty to attain a positive collective result, and thus any more cruelty than was absolutely necessary did not, as he put it, qualify as virtue.

"I am from a poor family," Modi told me. "If I had become a teacher, it would have made my family happy. But I got involved in a national patriotic movement, the RSS, where one must sacrifice. As a *pracharak*, I was like a Hindu monk in a white dress. My Hindu philosophy: terrorism is the enemy of humanism." I assumed he meant Islamic terrorism, which accounts for most large-scale violent attacks in India. He compared himself to Gandhi: "When the British ruled, so many fought for independence, and Gandhi turned this into a mass movement. I have converted economic development into a mass-movement psychology." His words echoed through the empty room. "I have a toll-free number where callers hear my recorded voice and can make complaints against the government, and the relevant department must respond within a week."

He rolled off his accomplishments: "modern roads, private railroads with double-decker containers, 50,000 kilometers of fiber-optic networks, 2,200 kilometers of gas pipelines, 1,400 kilometers of drinking-water pipelines to 7,000 villages, 24-hour uninterrupted power in rural areas, the first Indian state with private ports, a totally integrated coastal-development plan, two LNG [liquefied natural gas] terminals and two new ones coming on line." Statistics and lists seemed to have a spellbinding effect on him. He quantified everything.

He mentioned, too, the plant to be built in Gujarat by Tata Motors, which will employ several thousand workers to produce the Nano, the world's cheapest car, priced at \$2,500. Luring Tata, perhaps India's most prestigious company, to Gujarat had been a coup for Modi, and billboards around Ahmedabad proclaimed his accomplishment. "For so long, the whole coastal area had been subjugated to Mumbai," he said. "But now the richness is coming back home to Gujarat. Gujarat will be the center point for east-west connectivity, from Africa to Indonesia."

He is a very driven man, with no personal life, from what I gathered. He exuded power and control. How could he not have been implicated in the 2002 pogrom?, I asked myself.

A NUMBER OF HINDUS, all of them of the enlightened, cosmopolitan class, as well as Muslims and several foreign writers, told me that Modi's personality contains an element of fascism. Sophia Khan, a human-rights worker, put it bluntly: "He's a fascist man. We Muslims don't exist for him. Our neighborhoods are called mini-Pakistans, while the Hindus live where the malls and multiplexes are."

Is Modi a fascist? Although episodes in his political career and his role in the events of February 2002 suggest as much, the answer is, ultimately, no. "What makes Modi different from Hitler," explained Prasad Chacko, who heads a local

NGO, "is that while Hitler thought fascism the end result of political evolution, Modi knows that *Hindutva* is only a phase that cannot last, so now he focuses on development, not communal divides." In fact, Modi has recently gone after the very Hindu nationalists who put him in power, arresting some members of a Hindu-chauvinist group. He can't or won't apologize for 2002. Therefore, showing that he is less extremist than other Hindu-firsters has become his method for gaining acceptance on the national stage, in advance of running for prime minister, according to Achyut Yagnik, a journalist and historian.

Modi is helped in his ambition by the general atmosphere of civilizational tension. Whether it be the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the threat posed by Iran, possible chaos in Pakistan, or Islamic terrorism in Kashmir and in India itself, the global situation reminds Hindus—the overwhelming majority of Indian voters—how much they have to fear from Muslim radicalism, and how much Modi signifies a bulwark against it: not through any specific act nowadays, but through the whole aura of his no-nonsense rule. As much as India fears Pakistan, it fears Pakistan's collapse even more. The threat of Islamic anarchy in the region is perfectly suited to the further consolidation of Hindu nationalism, even as intercommunal tension represents, arguably, a more profound threat to the country than even the increasingly drastic shortage of water. What I encountered in interviews with victims of the 2002 violence was not so much radicalization, but alienation from India, evidenced by their withdrawal into their own communities, their reluctance to venture among Hindus.

The corresponding Hindu fear of Islam runs parallel with a more understated but palpable yearning for order. India's rise as an economic and naval power has invited frustrating comparisons with China: whereas the authoritarian government in China can make things happen, development happens in India mainly *in spite of* the government. Hanif Lakdawala told me that, especially because of the nightmarish chaos of Indian cities, "there are some in this country ready to accept a fascist, or at least a very strong dictator."

Not a fascist, in my opinion, but certainly someone like Modi. As Vimal Ambani, a prominent, liberal-minded Gujarati businessman, told me, "At the end of the day, Modi still offers the best model for governance in India."

OF COURSE, MODI'S record since 2002 has not been perfect. Because of 2002, he has been denied a visa to the United States, and this stigma has hurt foreign investment, even as Gujarat has become the prime destination for domestic deal-making. Despite all the infrastructure projects, Gujarat still ranks low on scales of human development in India: malnutrition afflicts almost half of the children younger than 5, three-quarters of the women suffer from anemia, and two-thirds of the people are literate—barely above the national average.

In fact, what truly prevents Modi from taking the grand leap of his imagination—that is, remaking Gujarat into a kind of antiseptic global entrepôt, like Singapore and Dubai—is the ball-and-chain reality of the Indian landscape itself. Take Ahmedabad, encased in tear-inducing smog, jammed with wailing motorbikes and auto rickshaws, its broken sidewalks

punctuated by stray cows and beggars. Founded in 1411 by Ahmed Shah of the Gujarat sultanate, the city was something of a playground for internationally renowned architects in the 1950s, when the Western elite placed newly independent India on a pedestal as the hope of humanity. (Le Corbusier designed the Textile Mills Association Building, and Louis Kahn the Indian Institute of Management.) But with the exception of a few gems, Ahmedabad, with a population of 4.5 million, remains weighed down by the same affliction that ails other Indian cities: little of architectural note or beauty among a handful of truly magnificent medieval Muslim monuments and the mishmash of steel-and-glass Dubai-style dwellings of the newly rich.

India is 37 percent urban. Within the next two decades it will be 50 percent so. Bimal Patel, a local architect and urban planner, explained that the real governing challenge of India's leaders will be to make cities like Ahmedabad more livable and efficient. Under Modi, a new park-and-waterfront project, designed by Patel, is rising along six miles of the Sabarmati River, which runs through Ahmedabad. For the most part, though, the chief minister has avoided the local politics of this and other Gujarati cities.

Modi has also done nothing about the communal cantons that have sprung up under his rule. Now Ahmedabad's old walled city is one of the only areas where Muslims—who make up 9 percent of the city's population—and Hindus can really mix. The most poignant scene I came across during two weeks of wandering around Ahmedabad was at the Sarkhej Roza, the 15th-century mosque-and-tomb complex dedicated to Sheikh Ahmed Khattu, the spiritual adviser to Ahmed Shah. Amid the medieval domes and balconies overlooking a water tank, families picnicked, young couples whispered, children played ball, and young men attended prayer meetings. The architecture, with its elegant stucco and grillwork, blended Islamic and Hindu styles in a composite known as Indo-Saracenic. But at least until the park-and-waterfront project is completed, there is no corresponding mixing of peoples in Ahmedabad today: the crowd at the Sarkhej Roza was exclusively Muslim.

FOR 10 HOURS, I traveled by bus and car from Ahmedabad south to the coast at Diu, the southernmost point of Gujarat's Kathiawar Peninsula, the site of Portuguese monuments that have particular relevance to the larger Indian story.

We drove along broken roads through a never-ending series of hovels, past creaking and dusty carts and the shanties and lean-tos of burlap and rusty corrugated iron that define rural India. On this journey through Gujarat, though, I found paved roads in many places, and running water and electricity just about everywhere. As primitive as the scenes looked, I knew from journeys in poorer Indian states like Bihar and West Bengal that much progress had been made.

Still, South Korea? No, not for a few decades at the very least. India could be a great regional power and a pivotal state, but it is not likely to reach the level of development of the East Asian tiger economies.

Diu, a key strategic base for Portugal's Indian Ocean Empire, had been captured from the Ottoman Turks in 1535. The sea gently knocked at the ramparts of the Portuguese citadel, mustard- and lead-colored after centuries of wear. Weeds crept between the stones, wild pigs wandered about, and groups of young men loudly ambled along the stone-works, seemingly unaware of the significance of this immense curiosity, topped at its highest point by a lonely white cross. The massive Portuguese churches, with their colossal white Gothic facades, stood equally forlorn, their walls faded and leprous. You could actually see and hear the plaster falling at the close wing-beats of the pigeons. Only a few hundred years old, these dilapidated monuments are more like relics from far-back antiquity, so divorced do they seem from the local environment.

As empires rise and fall, only their ideas can remain, adapted to the needs of the people they once ruled. The Portuguese, given only to plunder and exploitation, brought no ideas save for their Catholic religion, which sank little root among Hindus and Muslims. And so these ruins are merely sad and, after a manner, beautiful. The British, by contrast, brought tangible development, ports and railways, that created the basis for a modern state. More important, they brought the framework for parliamentary democracy that Indians, who already possessed indigenous traditions of heterodoxy and pluralism, were able to fit to their own needs. Indeed, the very Hindu pantheon, with its many gods rather than one, works toward the realization that competing truths are what enable freedom. Thus, the British,

despite all their flaws, advanced an ideal of Indian greatness. And that greatness, as enlightened Indians will tell you, is impossible to achieve without a moral component.

For as the influence of an economically burgeoning India now seeps both westward and eastward, to the Iranian plateau and to the Gulf of Thailand (the borders of viceregal India and its shadow zones a hundred years ago), it can grow only as a force of communal coexistence, a force that rests on India's strengths as the world's largest democracy. India, in other words, despite its flashy economic growth, will be nothing but another gravely troubled developing nation if it can't maintain a minimum of domestic harmony. Mercifully, the forces of Indian democracy have already survived 60 years of turmoil, attested to by the stability of coalition governments following the era of Congress Party rule. These forces appear sufficiently grounded either to reject Modi at the national level or to contain his worst impulses as he moves—as many expect he will—from Gandhinagar to New Delhi. After all, the churches and bastions in Diu are ruins not because they represent an idea that failed but because they represent no idea at all, whereas India has been an idea

As much as India fears Pakistan, it fears Pakistan's collapse even more. The threat of Islamic anarchy in the region is perfectly suited to the further consolidation of Hindu nationalism.

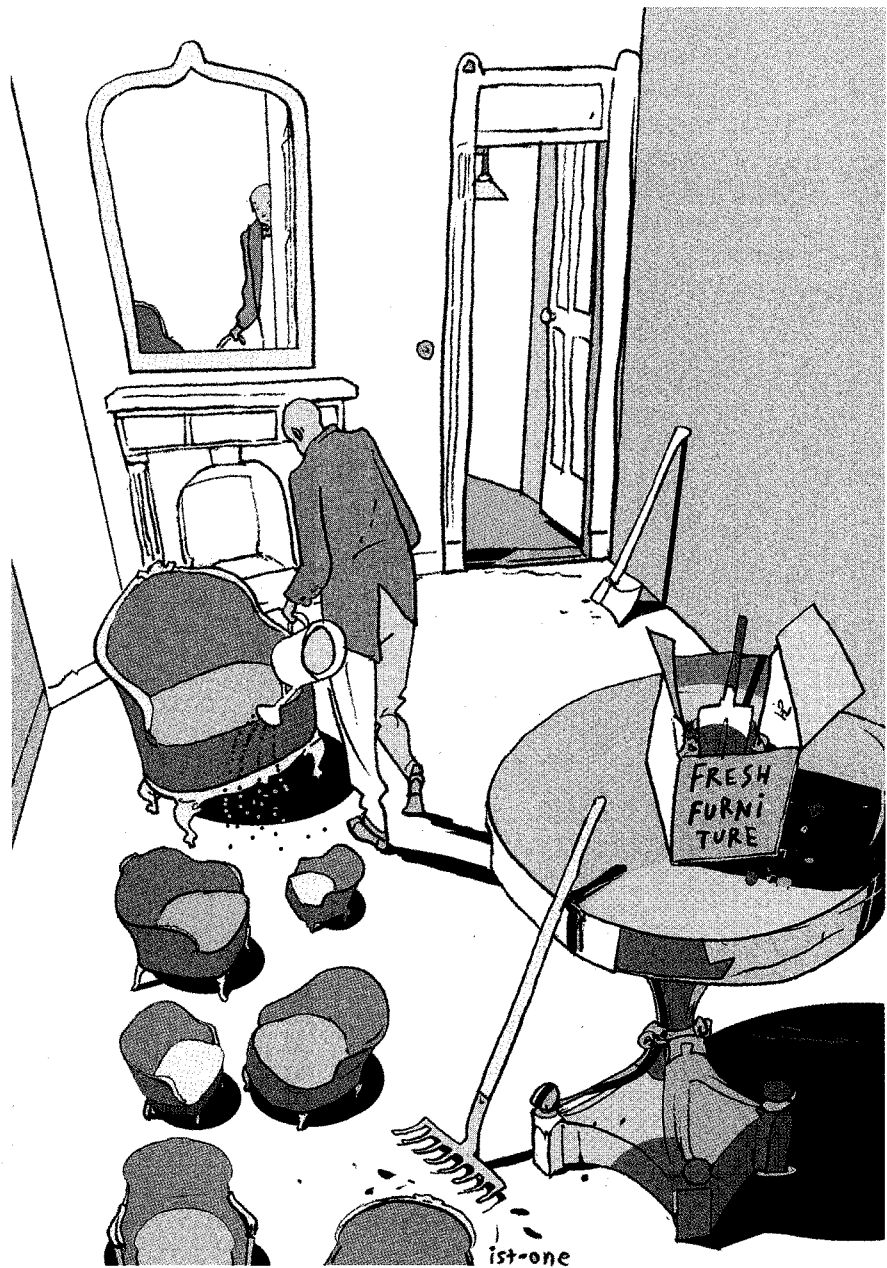
since Gandhi's Salt March in 1930. Either Modi will fit his managerial genius to the service of that idea, or he will stay where he is. Hindus elsewhere in India are less communal-minded than those in Gujarat, and that will be his dilemma.

BUT IN GUJARAT, at least, peace will not come easy. From Diu I hired a car and drove two hours westward along the coast to Somnath, site of the Hindu temple destroyed by Mahmud of Ghazni, as well as by other invaders, and rebuilt for the seventh time starting in 1947.

This temple, with its massive pale-ocher *shikhara* (tower) and assemblage of domes, sits at the edge of a vast seascape glazed over with heat. The coiled and writhing cosmic scenes on its facade are so complex that they create the sculptural equivalent of infinity. The day I was there, prayer blasted from loudspeakers. It was a madhouse on account of the full moon. Hundreds of worshippers checked their bags at a ratty cloak stand and left their shoes in scattered piles. Signs warned that no mobile phones or other electronic devices would be permitted inside, but I knew better. I put my BlackBerry in my cargo pocket, not trusting it to the mild chaos of the cloak stand, and expecting the usual lackadaisical developing-world frisk. I then joined the long single-file line to enter the temple. At the entrance, I was savagely searched, and my BlackBerry was discovered. I was rightly yelled at, and summoned back to the cloak stand. "Muslim terrorism," one worshipper alerted me. From the cloak stand I got back into line and entered the temple.

Semidarkness enveloped me as worshippers kissed the flower-bedecked idol of a cow. The air was suffocating, as packed-together bodies approached the womb-chamber. I felt as if I were trespassing on a mystery. Though nonbelievers were officially welcomed, I knew that I was outside the boundaries of the single organism of the *crowd*—the philosopher Elias Canetti's word for a large group of people who abandon their individuality in favor of an intoxicating collective symbol. This sanctum was a pulsating vortex of faith. Some dropped to their hands and knees and prayed on the stone floor. I'd had the same extreme and cloistered sensation at two of the holiest sites of Catholicism and Shiism: the

GALLERY FRESH FURNITURE! by Istvan Banyai



Shrine of the Black Madonna in Czestochowa, Poland; and the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, Iraq (where I had to sneak in with a busload of visiting Turkish businessmen).

You couldn't help but understand Hindu feelings about Muslim depredations of this temple, one of India's 12 *Jyotirlingas*, or places with "signs of light" that symbolize the god Shiva. And yet, as emotions crackled like electricity all around me, I also couldn't help but think of what Hanif Lakdawala had asked me, in a plea as much as a question: "What can we poor Muslims of today do about Mahmud of Ghazni?" ■

Robert D. Kaplan is a national correspondent for The Atlantic and a senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, in Washington, D.C.

ADV



worldw
ture
s m

h c
rket
rpor
ions

need
e ma
omy



WW

BOOKS

Theirs Truly THE LAST GREAT EPISTOLARY EXCHANGE *By Thomas Mallon* • **88 He's Back**
WHY MARX STILL MATTERS *By Christopher Hitchens* • **96 COVER TO COVER: PLAYBOY AS**
PARABLE; POST-SECULAR SUNDAYS; GENETIC AESTHETICS; LAX BRITANNICA; AND MORE



ILLUSTRATION BY MARC YANKUS; PHOTO COURTESY
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, VASSAR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

Theirs Truly

THE LETTERS BETWEEN ROBERT LOWELL AND ELIZABETH BISHOP ARE ONE OF THE GREAT POETIC CORRESPONDENCES OF ALL TIME—AND BECAME THE REAL ESSENCE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP.

By Thomas Mallon

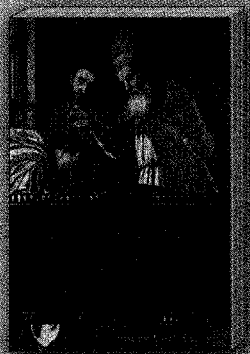
START WITH HIM: tall and handsome and prolific, and in regular bursts quite crazy. The manic descendant of famous New England blue bloods, Robert Lowell revitalized American poetry in the 1950s and '60s by vaulting into a confessional spot between the desiccated mannerisms of the academy

and the ululations of the Beats. The poems of his fourth book, *Life Studies* (1959), felt raw and disciplined all at once, whereas in his actual life Lowell could attain those states only in alternation. He became famous—making the cover of *Time*, dancing attendance on the widowed Jackie Kennedy, and protesting the Vietnam War—but the mental breakdowns, during which he'd rhapsodize about Hitler and fall for a

new girl, finally wore him out. He died in 1977, at 60, in the midst of leaving his third wife for his second.

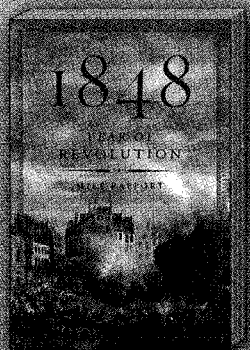
"I'm getting down my ladder to the moon" is the way he describes, in 1957, one of his innumerable subsidings from mania to functionality. In this instance he is imparting the news to Elizabeth Bishop, who students of American poetry now realize was both the lodestar and antipode of Lowell's

NEW TITLES IN HISTORY FROM BASIC

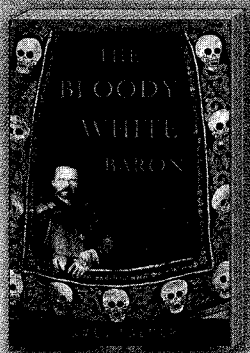


A HISTORY OF THE PAPACY

"An immensely readable treatment of one of the world's most important institutions" —Alexander McCall Smith



"An ambitious and wide-ranging book." —Independent Weekly



THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE RUSSIAN NOBLEMAN WHO BECAME THE LAST KHAN OF MONGOLIA

"A wonderfully lucid and intelligent resurrection of a forgotten history and its terrible protagonist. James Palmer here establishes himself both as scholar and writer." —Colin Thubron

WWW.BASICBOOKS.COM

stressful voyage through life. Bishop spent many of the years of their deep and decent friendship in Brazil, often depressed but never manic. Her poetic output stayed small as Lowell's grew abundant; unlike his, her verse confessions remained reluctant and oblique. Both sides of their 30-year epistolary exchange have already been published, separately and in part, but the letters' new joint arrangement, a volume called *Words in Air*, allows readers at last to experience the full responsiveness of one poet to the other, as it occurred, letter by letter.

Lowell and Bishop met in New York in 1947, at a dinner party given by the poet and critic Randall Jarrell. She was 36, shy and asthmatic, a graduate of Vassar raised by an aunt and two sets of grandparents in Nova Scotia and Massachusetts. Her poems were at this point known chiefly to other poets. Lowell was a much hotter prospect, a former student of John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren, a Catholic convert, and a convicted felon, for conscientious objection during World War II. Both poets, as Thomas Travisano points out in his introduction to this new volume, were more or less on the rebound: Lowell divorcing the writer Jean Stafford, and Bishop breaking up with her female lover in Key West. Over the next several years, Bishop kept a sensible distance from Lowell's confused and fitful ardor. Before long he married the critic Elizabeth Hardwick, and Bishop went off to live with Lota de Macedo Soares in Brazil.

Always brilliantly attentive to animals in her poems, Bishop found much to see around Petrópolis. One afternoon, she reports to Lowell, a five-foot-long snake passed by with the feet of a baby bird "waving feebly in his mouth, the parent birds shrieking and having hysterics. Lota got her rifle and got him with the first shot." Ambivalent for years about her exotic relocation, Bishop surveys all the exaggeration and corruption that surrounds her, and wonders at one point to Lowell, "This isn't my world—or is it?"

Being removed from American poetry's competitive hothouse had its imaginative advantages, but her absence

and small output made it crucial for Bishop to have a champion on the scene back home. Out of real admiration, as well as a sort of devoted sublimation, Lowell filled that role for years, helping her secure grants and prizes and eventually teaching positions. In return, Bishop provided ballast as he sailed off on the waters of experimentation and celebrity. Two years after giving *Life Studies* a blurb, and thus her poet's-poet

imprimatur, she gently cautions Lowell not to publish some sloppy translations of Rimbaud: "Your star is so very high now." If he goes ahead, Bishop worries, the critical knives will be out for him. Her generalized warnings against extreme subject matter and the fad of posing as "dope-addicts—saints—either one or

the other—*anything* rather than be what we are" help keep Lowell from drifting too far, at least for many years. Her zeal for exactitude matches his for disclosure. In 1963, commenting on his manuscript of "The Neo-Classical Urn," set in a park, she objects to the phrase *I left the plaster statue of a nymph*, on the grounds that "even the most miserable neo-classicism couldn't use plaster because it wouldn't last a week outdoors." In the published version of the poem, Lowell turned the statue to stone.

He never succeeded in reconciling "the Puritanical iron hand of constraint and the gushes of pure wildness" that he saw within himself. He suffered manic attacks during and just after two of his rare face-to-face visits with Bishop but took pains to keep his mania from infecting the correspondence that he counted on to bring him "color and peace." On one occasion, fearful of sounding off-kilter, he reassures Bishop, "This is a rushed letter, much more so than my state of mind." Late in 1967, after Lota committed suicide, Bishop suffered an alcoholic collapse and then a bad fall while visiting Lowell's New York apartment. It seems to have been easier for each of them to come apart in the other's presence instead of on the pages of the letters, which became the real and cherished essence of their relationship.

Lowell had, early on, almost proposed marriage to Bishop, and years later he explained, "Asking you is the

WORDS IN AIR: THE COMPLETE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN ELIZABETH BISHOP AND ROBERT LOWELL

Edited by Thomas
Travisano with
Saskia Hamilton

FARRAR, STRAUS &
GIROUX

Why some people think

Walt Whitman

makes chocolate candy.

KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH ART THESE DAYS. So it's no wonder that some of them mistake America's most revolutionary poet for a box of chocolates.

The son of a Quaker carpenter, Walt Whitman grew up with an affinity for nature. This, along with his love for New York City, inspired him to write a truly original kind of poetry, the likes of



Whitman satisfied his sweet tooth with rich, wave-like verse. Every kid should make poetry a part of his diet.

reinvented *Leaves of Grass*, expanding and editing it in an effort to publish his quintessential collection. In essence, *Leaves of Grass* was Walt himself in verse form. Walt Whitman changed poetry. His life's work was ahead of its time. And though he lived long before the Summer of Love, he was the original beatnik — an inspiring example for writers like Ginsberg and Kerouac.



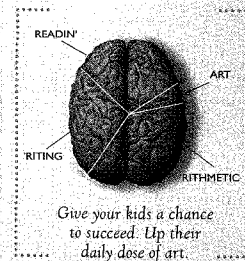
Too much of Whitman's art won't give you a stomachache.

of poems became known as *Leaves of Grass*. Due to its hedonistic, sensual, even narcissistic subject matter, the poems were often banned. This guy pushed the envelope all right, before most folks even knew there was an envelope to push.

Throughout his career, Whitman rewrote and

Whitman can influence your child, too. That's what art does. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. So they become more well-rounded adults.

For Ten Simple Ways to get more art in kids' lives, visit AmericansForTheArts.org.



Art. Ask for More.

AMERICANSFORTHEARTS.ORG

NAMM
Foundation

Image donated by Corbis-Bettmann

great books summer program

at Amherst, Stanford &
William & Mary

A Summer of Great Books and Big Ideas.

Outstanding young people gather to read great literature, converse with college professors, and explore big ideas through college-style seminars. For grades 6-8 and 9-12.

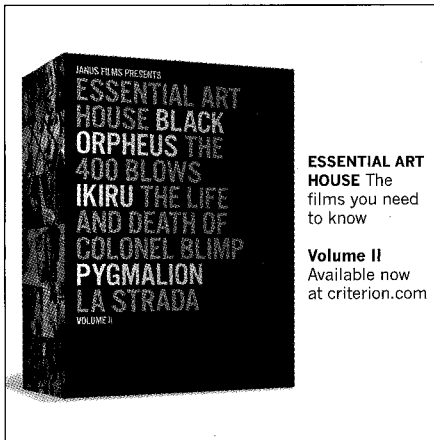
Choose from one, two and three week sessions

Stanford University, Amherst College,
and the College of William & Mary

www.GreatBooksSummer.com

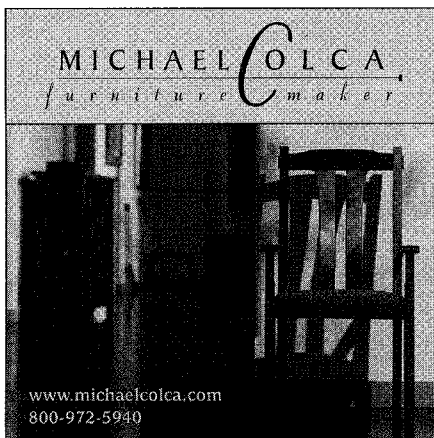
or 866-480-READ

In association with The Great Books Foundation



ESSENTIAL ART
HOUSE The
films you need
to know

Volume II
Available now
at criterion.com



www.michaelcolca.com
800-972-5940



Free catalog: Award-winning, traditional, loose
teas of unsurpassed cup quality. Since 1959.

Grace Tea Company, Ltd.

156 Fifth Avenue #1112, New York City 10010
Tel/fax 212 255-2935 • www.gracetea.com



China, Crystal, Silver, Collectibles
280,000 Patterns • Old/New • Buy/Sell

REPLACEMENTS, LTD.
1-800-REPLACE (1-800-737-5223)
PO Box 26029, Greensboro, NC 27420 • Dept TA

www.replacements.com®

might have been for me." In most of the letters, romance remains not so much an undercurrent as a charming above-ground stream of salutations and vocatives: she is his "Darling," he her "dear boy." For three decades, they practice a sort of creative courtly love, with Lowell as the knight chevalier, seeking approval of the lady in her faraway jungle tower. A reader of the correspondence may be surprised to find that the carefully banked fires of Bishop's personality somehow create an even stronger glow than Lowell's accelerated blazes.

Sharp social and personal observations, from each of them, allow the correspondence to breathe, opening it up beyond guarded confidences and dialogue about their craft. When comparing new works by her college contemporary, Mary McCarthy, with those by her own early mentor, Marianne Moore, Bishop ponders the "strange contrast—Mary so sane and mean; Marianne so mad and good—which do you choose?" In August 1964, just after Flannery O'Connor's death, Lowell paints a splendid miniature of the southern Catholic writer:

It seems such a short time ago that I met her at Yaddo, 23 or 24, always in a blue jean suit, working on the last chapters of *Wise Blood*, suffering from undiagnosed pains, a face formless at times, then very strong and young and right.

The passage exemplifies a quality in Lowell's writing that Bishop, elsewhere in the letters, remarks upon: the way his prose can be "almost on the point of precipitation into poetry."

It is, in fact, a blending of the two that causes the great aesthetic crisis in their correspondence, during the early 1970s, when Lowell gets ready to publish *The Dolphin*, a volume in which he has altered and versified some of the angry, hurt letters that Elizabeth Hardwick wrote to him after he'd left her for the Irish writer Caroline Blackwood. Aware

of his own recklessness, Lowell tells Bishop in February 1972, "I am going to publish, and don't want advice, except for yours." Bishop's slow-starting response—"It's hell to write this"—turns almost shockingly firm:

One can use one's life as material—one does, anyway—but these letters—aren't you violating a trust? IF you were given permission—IF you hadn't changed them ... etc. But *art just isn't worth that much*.

Lowell makes some adjustments to the book but does not otherwise desist, and even a year later he has nothing like Bishop's clarity about the matter.

For three decades, the poets practice a sort of creative courtly love, with Lowell as the knight chevalier, seeking approval of the lady in her faraway jungle tower.

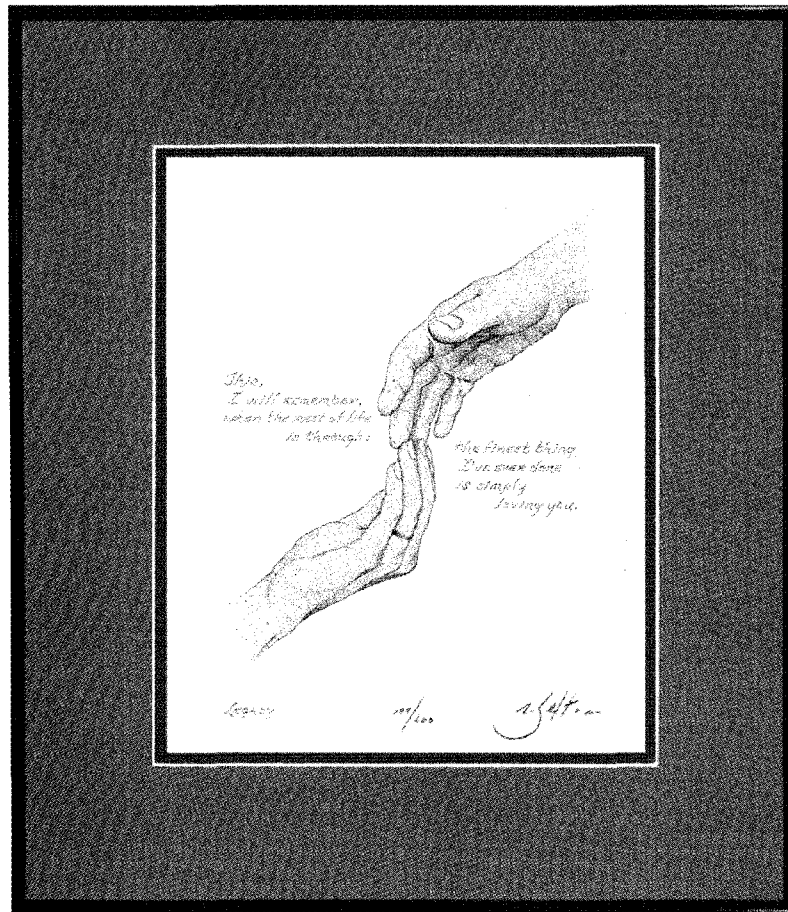
"My sin (mistake?) was publishing," he writes. "I couldn't bear to have my book (my life) wait hidden inside me like a dead child."

The dispute, serious as it is, does not still what Lowell calls his "old admiring and loving voice," through which he continues speaking in the few years' worth of letters that he and Bishop have left to exchange. He had once exclaimed, "I seem to spend my life missing you!" and in the early years of their friendship had pondered their impossible geography: "We seem attached to each other by some stiff piece of wire, so that each time one moves, the other moves in another direction. We should call a halt to that." But the distance between them, and their inability to overcome it except during those widely spaced visits, was actually fate's gift to them. The letters that separation necessitated—even the ones that crossed in the mails or never arrived—became the connection that Lowell and Bishop were meant to live. *Words in Air* takes its place—amid the letters of Keats and Hopkins and Owen—as one of the great poetic correspondences. It is also, almost certainly, the last of them. ■

Thomas Mallon is a novelist and critic. His study of letters, *Yours Ever*, will be published this year.

Editor's Choice will return next issue.

A Most Unusual Gift of Love



The poem reads: *"This I will remember,
when the rest of life is through:
the finest thing I've ever done
is simply loving you."*

Dear Reader,

The drawing you see above is called "Legacy." It is completely composed of dots of ink. After writing the poem, I worked with a quill pen and placed thousands of these dots, one at a time, to create this gift in honor of the love shared by two of my dearest friends.

Now, I have decided to offer "Legacy" to those who have known and valued its sentiment. Each litho is numbered and signed by hand and precisely captures the detail of the drawing. As an anniversary, wedding, or Christmas gift for your husband or wife, or for a special couple within your circle of friends, I believe you will find it most appropriate.

Measuring 14" by 16", it is available either fully-framed in a subtle copper tone with hand-cut mats of pewter gray and rust at \$110, or in the mats alone at \$85. Please add \$14.50 for insured shipping and packaging. Either way, your satisfaction is guaranteed.

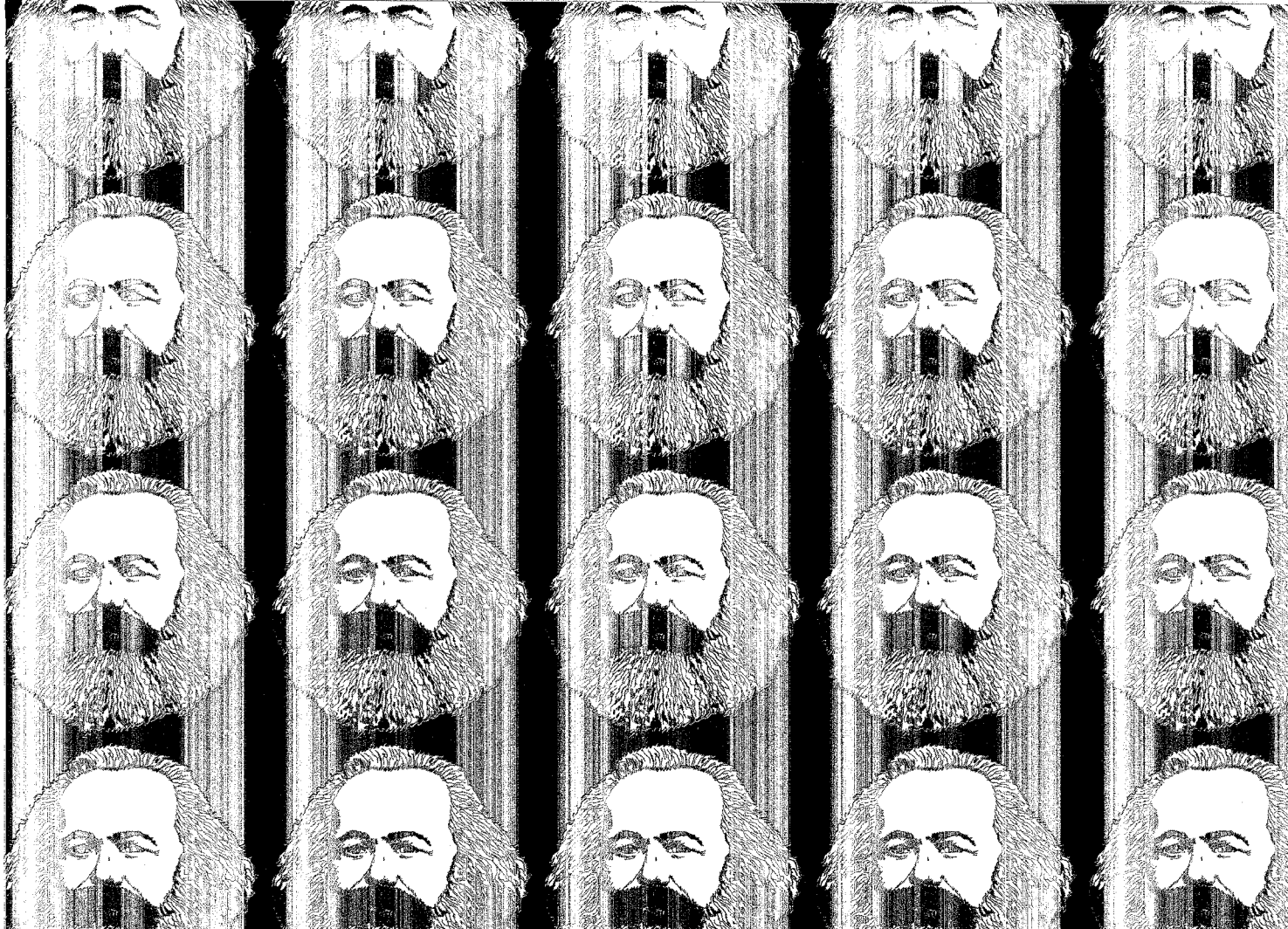
My best wishes are with you.

The Art of Robert Sexton

491 Greenwich Street (at Grant), San Francisco, California 94133

Master Card and Visa orders are welcome. Please send card name, number, address and expiration date, or phone 415-989-1630 between 10 am and 6 pm PST, or fax to 415-989-0011 any time. Checks, also, are accepted. Please allow 3 weeks for delivery.

You will find an ever-growing collection of my works at my home on the web. Please visit: www.robertsexton.com



He's Back

THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS AND THE ENDURING RELEVANCE OF MARX

By Christopher Hitchens

THE LATE HUW WHELDON of the BBC once described to me a series, made in the early days of radio, about celebrated exiles who had lived in London. At one stage, this had involved tracking down an ancient retiree who had toiled in the British Museum's reading room during the Victorian epoch. Asked if he could remember a certain Karl Marx, the wheezing old pensioner at first came up empty. But when primed with different prompts about the once-diligent attendee (monopolizing the same seat number, always

there between opening and closing time, heavily bearded, suffering from carbuncles, tending to lunch in the Museum Tavern, very much interested in works on political economy), he let the fount of memory be unsealed. "Oh

Mr. Marx, yes, to be sure. Gave us a lot of work 'e did, with all 'is calls for books and papers ..." His interviewers craned forward eagerly, to hear the man say: "And then

one day 'e just stopped coming. And you know what's a funny fing, sir?" A pregnant pause. "Nobody's ever 'eard of 'im since!" This, clearly, was one of those stubborn proletarians for the alleviation

of whose false consciousness Marx had labored in vain.

Until comparatively recently, with the slight exception perhaps of certain pockets within the academy, it was a general tendency among educated people as well, even those of radical temper, to put their old volumes of Marx up on the shelf reserved for the phlogiston theory. Would we again need to consult *Critique of the Gotha Program*, or the celebrated attacks on Dühring and Lassalle? A few of us kept a bit of powder dry, just in case the times should turn dialectical again. One or two writers predicted that Marx's relevance would be rediscovered: John Cassidy was arguably

**MARX'S
"DAS KAPITAL":
A BIOGRAPHY**

By Francis Wheen
GROVE PRESS

QUICKHONEY

New from The Library of America

The biggest, best edition of John Cheever's stories and novels ever

John Cheever

Collected Stories and Other Writings

Complete Novels

Blake Bailey, editor Published to coincide with editor Blake Bailey's groundbreaking new biography, here in two definitive volumes are *The Stories of John Cheever*, selections from *The Way Some People Live*, uncollected stories and essays, and the novels *The Wapshot Chronicle*, *The Wapshot Scandal*, *Bullet Park*, *Falconer*, and *Oh What a Paradise It Seems*. 1056 pages and 960 pages • \$35 each

"The best sports book of all time" [SI]—with 4 other Liebling classics

A. J. Liebling

The Sweet Science & Other Writings

Pete Hamill, editor For the first time in one volume, Pete Hamill presents five great books that demonstrate A. J. Liebling's extraordinary vitality, humor, and versatility as a writer: *The Sweet Science*, *The Earl of Louisiana*, *The Jollity Building*, *Between Meals*, and *The Press*. 1050 pages • \$40

Exotic tales and pioneering novels of 19th-century New Orleans and the Caribbean from a seminal American writer

Lafcadio Hearn

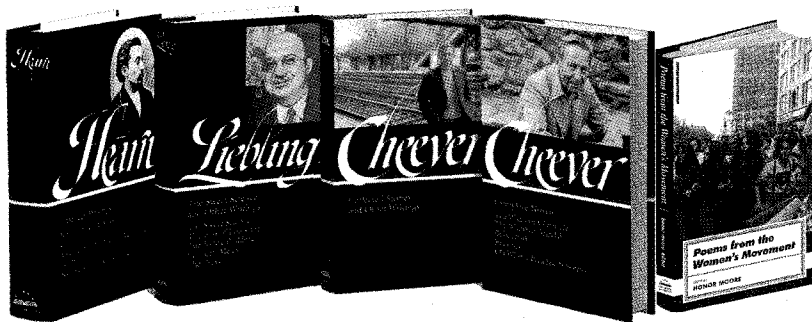
American Writings

Christopher Benfey, editor An unrivaled collection of a writer who explored America's racial boundaries, including the memoir *Two Years in the French West Indies*, and the novels *Chita* and *Youma*. 864 pages • \$40

Honor Moore presents the poems that gave voice to a revolution

Poems from the Women's Movement

Honor Moore, editor This landmark new collection by Honor Moore assembles the unforgettable poetry that inspired, and was inspired by, the Women's Movement of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, including poems by Sylvia Plath, Muriel Rukeyser, Adrienne Rich, Anne Sexton, Sonia Sanchez, Lucille Clifton, May Swenson, Alice Walker, Audre Lorde, Sharon Olds, and many others. 272 pages • \$20



THE LIBRARY of AMERICA
Classic Writers. Classic Books.

www.loa.org

Distributed by Penguin Group (USA), Inc.

the Atlantic

PRESENTS

THE ATLANTIC POLITICS

Compelling and authoritative, *The Atlantic: Politics* delivers original reporting and sophisticated analysis from our correspondents and bloggers. Edited by Marc Ambinder, whose coverage of the presidential campaign and transition earned him unmatched access to the new power players in Washington, the site provides a definitive view from inside the Beltway.

With features such as Six Clicks (Marc's pick of the half dozen most important stories of the day) and the Zeitgeist, *The Atlantic: Politics* is essential reading for political junkies looking to decode the headlines and learn what's really going on in the age of Obama.

Politics.TheAtlantic.com



PRACTICA MUSICA

Music Theory and Ear Training in One Win/Mac CD

Learn how to read and understand music with the world's most complete music training software. Our friendly textbook, *Exploring Theory*, will guide you through a wide range of activities with difficulty levels ranging from simple pitch reading to rhythm tapping to polyphonic dictation, chord recognition, even composition. Most activities do not require an electronic keyboard – you can work with the sound capabilities found in your Windows or Macintosh computer (Win XP/Vista or Mac OS X, including Intel Macs). Used in thousands of schools and conservatories, *Practica Musica* is also available for home study.

For more information, visit our web site or call 1-800-445-4866.

www.ars-nova.com/atlantic

Undiminished zest for life!

Diverse, appealing retirement community minutes from Oberlin College and its Conservatory of Music. Over 400 cultural events a year. Coordinated system of residential and health care options.

KENDAL® at Oberlin

Oberlin, Ohio
800.548.9469
www.kao.kendal.org

SERVING OLDER ADULTS IN THE QUAKER TRADITION

AFRICA • CHINA • INDIA • JAPAN • NEPAL

Since 1989

UPTON TEA IMPORTS

Purveyor of the World's Finest Teas

1-800-234-8327 Free catalog listing over 350 varieties of garden-fresh, loose tea
www.uptontea.com

34A Hayden Rowe St. • Hopkinton, MA 01748

MEN'S WIDE SHOES

EEE-EEEEEE, SIZES 5-20

200 styles • FREE catalog
1-800-992-WIDE

HITCHCOCK SHOES, INC.
Dept. 9B Hingham, MA 02043 www.wideshoes.com



the most surprising of these in that one hardly expected, in the fall of 1997, an essay from the economic specialist of *The New Yorker* announcing that the co-author of the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* could turn out to be “the next” significant intellectual for those whose job it was to study the markets. James Ledbetter, himself an accomplished business journalist, has since produced an admirable Penguin edition of Marx’s journalism (most of the best, which was very good indeed, having been produced for Horace Greeley’s *New York Tribune*). And Francis Wheen, who wrote a notable biography of Marx in 1999, has now published an anatomy of *Capital* (as I shall henceforth call it), which concludes with the opinion that Marx “could yet become the most influential thinker of the twenty-first century.”

As I write this, every newspaper informs me of frantic efforts by merchants to unload onto the consumer, at almost any price, the vast surplus of unsold commodities that have accumulated since the credit crisis began to take hold. The phrase *crisis of over-production*, which I learned so many long winters ago in “agitational” meetings, recurs to my mind. On other pages, I learn that the pride of American capitalism has seized up and begun to rust, and that automobiles may cease even to be made in Detroit as a consequence of insane speculation in worthless paper “derivatives.” Did I not once read somewhere about the bitter struggle between finance capital and industrial capital? The lines of jobless and hungry begin to lengthen, and what more potent image of those lines do we possess than that of the “reserve army” of the unemployed—capital’s finest weapon in beating down the minimum wage and increasing the hours of the working week? A disturbance in a remote corner of the world market leads to chaos and panic at the very center of the system (and these symptoms are given a multiplier effect when the pangs begin at the

center itself), and John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, doughty champions of capitalism at *The Economist*, admit straightforwardly in their book on the advantages of globalization that Marx, “as a prophet of the ‘universal interdependence of nations,’ as he called globalization ... can still seem startlingly

relevant ... His description of globalization remains as sharp today as it was 150 years ago.” The falling rate of profit, the tendency to monopoly ... how wrong could that old reading-room attendant have been?

Not all of these ironies are at capitalism’s expense, or at least not in a way that can bring any smirk, however wintry, to the grizzled features of the old leftist. (After

all, who was predicting even 30 years ago that Russia and China would today be turbocharged capitalist systems, however discrepant in type? And the present crisis was actually triggered by a “subprime” attempt to transform low-income people into property owners, albeit indebted ones ...) Then there is the apparent truism about another of Marx’s legacies, this time taken from James Buchan, author of *Frozen Desire: The Meaning of Money*:

Marx is so embedded in our Western cast of thought that few people are even aware of their debt to him. Everybody I know now believes that their attitudes are to an extent a creation of their material circumstances ... “that, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness”, as Marx wrote—and that changes in the way things are produced profoundly affect the affairs of humanity even outside the workshop or factory.

John Cassidy, in his essay, was so blunt as to reduce this one-dimensional interpretation to that once-famous vulgarism of James Carville’s: “It’s the economy, stupid.”

But Marx did not believe in the existence of any such organism as “the economy.” What he postulated, and

Marx did not believe in the existence of any such organism as “the economy.” He postulated a sharp distinction between the forces and the relations of production.

Now You Can Own An Authentic Signed Guitar by...

Led Zeppelin's

Robert Plant, Jimmy Page & John Paul Jones

Led Zeppelin formed in 1968. They quickly became one of the most successful and influential groups of all time.

They sold more than 300 million albums and were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1995.

American Royal Arts, celebrating 23 years in business, has secured only 10 of these historic guitars.

Call To Reserve Yours Today!

1-877-601-ROCK

100% Guaranteed • Forensically examined

ROCK AND ROLL ART & MEMORABILIA • Since 1986
AMERICAN ROYAL ARTS
SIGNEDROCK.COM



Robert Plant signing your guitar

13 Premium Handmade Cigars

The Thompson Baker's Dozen Plus includes Fuente, C.A.O., La Gloria, Macanudo, Gurkha, Rocky Patel & more...
Plus two free BONUS cigars, including a \$13 Cohiba!

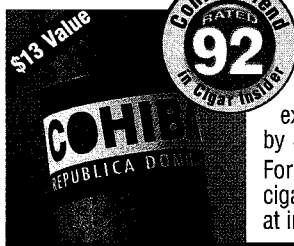
Compare at \$83
Special
Introductory Offer
\$29.95

Here's your chance to savor 12 hand-rolled cigars from some of the most elite cigar makers in existence. The Thompson Baker's Dozen Plus... Introductory priced at just \$29.95!

Included in our Baker's Dozen Plus are **Two Free BONUS Cigars!** One incredible smoke was created exclusively for Thompson Cigar by C.A.O. and is offered nowhere else!

Plus you'll receive a **FREE Cohiba Cigar Worth \$13...** our gift to you! Here's a chance to experience a cigar blend that has been rated 92 by *Cigar Insider*.

For over 90 years Thompson Cigar has been offering cigar aficionados premium quality, handmade cigars at incredibly low prices.



www.thompsoncigar.com **1-888-864-9678**

Type T8244 in our home page search bar and click GO

Get your Baker's Dozen Plus now! 14 top-notch brands for \$29.95

(#988179). Add \$4.95 shipping & handling. (All shipments to AK, HI, Guam, Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico must go priority mail - add an additional \$10.00. Florida residents add 6% sales tax + appropriate county tax. Remittance of any taxes on orders shipped to a location outside of Florida is the responsibility of the purchaser. In the event we are out of a Premium brand, Thompson reserves the right to substitute another premium brand cigar, of equal or greater value. All written orders MUST include your signature and date of birth. Limit one per customer.



America's Oldest Mail Order Cigar Company, Est 1915
P.O. Box 31274 • Tampa, FL 33631-3274 • Fax: 813-882-4605

OFFER EXPIRES 5/31/09 • NOT AVAILABLE TO MINORS AND GOOD ONLY IN THE USA

Dept. T8244

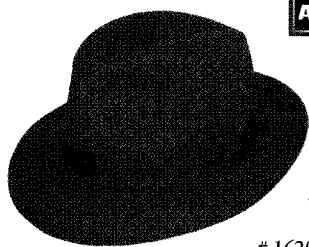
**SAVE
64%**

©2009 Thompson Cigar Co.

Rain or Shine

Pure fur felt headware, fair dinkum made in Australia for years of smart service.

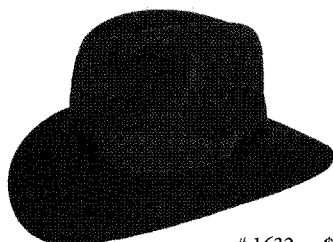
AKUBRA



1620...\$130

Sydney

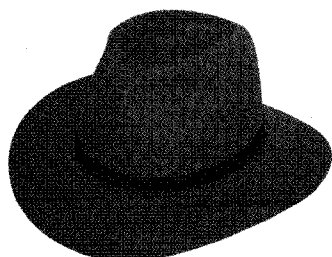
Soft felt fedora, 5" open crown, 2 1/2" brim.
Sizes 6 3/4 - 8. *Regency Fawn* or *Charcoal*



1632...\$125

Adventurer

Pure fur felt fedora, open 5 1/2" crown,
(Indy bash shown, shaping charge extra)
3 1/8" brim front and back, 2 3/4" on sides.
Sizes 7 - 8. *Mid Brown*



1622...\$150

Banjo Paterson

Pre-creased 4 1/2" crown, 2 3/4" brim.
Premium felt, Barramundi skin hat band.
6 3/4 - 8. *Heritage Fawn* or *Charcoal*

\$8 handling. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Visit us online or request a catalog



Filson® Outdoor Clothing & Luggage
Northwest and Northwest Coast
Native American Design Jewelry



David Morgan

800-324-4934 davidmorgan.com
11812N Creek Pkwy N, Suite 103 • Bothell WA 98011

Smart Mower for Small Lawns!

The Neuton Battery-Powered Mower uses no gas or oil, so it's quiet, clean, and starts instantly—every time! It's lightweight, so it's easy for anyone to use. So economical it costs about 10¢ to mow your lawn and never needs a tune-up. It's the only lawn mower that will also TRIM around trees and EDGE along your walk or driveway.



Get a FREE DVD and Catalog!

TOLL FREE **1-888-213-2354**

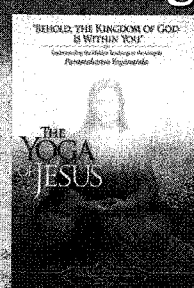
OR VISIT: **neutonmowers.com**

We'll send you complete details including model specifications, low, factory-direct prices, and our 6-Month Risk-Free Trial.

neuton
NATURALLY SMARTER POWER EQUIPMENT

64925X ©2009 CHP, Inc.

The Yoga of Jesus



Understanding the Hidden Teachings of the Gospels

by
Paramahansa Yogananda

author of
Autobiography of a Yogi

Quality Paperback \$14.00

Self-Realization Fellowship
www.yogananda.sri.org

MISSION LIGHTS
Table & Floor Lamps
Indoor & Outdoor Fixtures
Kichler's Canyon View Outdoor Lantern
(800) 736-0126
www.thebrightspot.com

CoffeeMakersEtc

Coffee & Espresso Equipment
for Your Home & Office
1-866-883-8181

www.coffeemakersetc.com



what made him different from any previous theorist of materialism whether historical or dialectical, was a sharp distinction between the *forces* and the *relations* of production. Within the integument of one system of exploitation, in other words, was contained a systemic conflict that, if not resolved, would lead to stagnation and decline but, if properly confronted, might lead to a higher synthesis of abundance and equality. (War between competitive capitalist states, for example, would be an instance of the negative. Seizure of power by an educated working class that understood and could transcend the logic of private ownership would be an example of human progress. Shall we just say for now that modern history furnishes more illustrations of the former than of the latter?) At all events, those who use the simplistic term *the economy* are, according to Marx, themselves "stupid."

In my opinion, therefore, the most powerful Marxist book of the past four decades was Rudolf Bahro's *The Alternative*, which showed how and why the East German state and economy were certain to implode. Communism, said Bahro—one of its former functionaries—was compelled to educate and train people up to a certain level. But beyond that level, it forbade them to think, or to inquire, or to use their initiative. Thus, while it created a vast amount of "surplus consciousness," it could find no way of employing this energy except by squandering and dissipating and ultimately repressing it. The conflict between the forces and relations of production in the eastern part of the homeland of Karl Marx thus became a locus classicus of the sort of contradiction he had originally identified. (Incidentally, and as Václav Havel, following Heidegger, once pointed out in an address to a joint session of Congress, this makes a strong case for "consciousness" having a say in the determination of "social being.")

Marx was a keen admirer of that other great Victorian Charles Darwin, and according to Engels he wanted to do for the economic system what the author of *The Origin of Species* had done for the natural order: lay bare its objective laws of motion and thus make it possible at last to dispense

the Atlantic EMPORIUM

MAKES GLASS INVISIBLE



Invisible Glass was developed with two simple objectives: superior cleaning power and "invisible" clarity. When compared to ordinary "blue water" glass cleaners, you'll immediately see how quickly Invisible Glass removes even the most difficult grime, making glass virtually disappear!

www.freeinvisibleglass.com
800.227.5538

DUAL ACTION KNEE STRAP



Knees take a beating! Cho-Pat's patented strap applies pressure upon the patellar tendons both below and above the knee to

reduce subluxation, improve tracking and elevation, and provide support and stability. Easy to use, comfortable, allows full mobility, and available in six sizes for more specific and effective results.

www.cho-pat.com
800.221.1601

PERSONALIZED PORTRAITS



Personalized, hand-illustrated portraits and invitations from your photos. Select your materials, size, and colors and preview your design within 5 days. Have it delivered within 10 days or less. View our before and after samples or request a catalog online at:

www.allpopart.com
877.728.9278

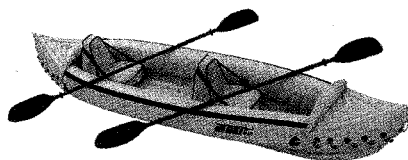
SMART IS SEXY



Join the introduction network exclusively for graduates, faculty, and students of top-ranked colleges and universities. The Right Stuff is the Ivy League of dating.

www.rightstuffdating.com
800.988.5288

PORTABLE FUN IN THE SUN



Our 12'4" Sea Eagle 370 inflatable kayak goes anywhere there is water, weighs just 34 lbs & packs in small bag. Paddle wild rivers, remote ponds, secluded bays, scenic lakes... even ocean surf! SE-370 includes two 7'10" aluminum paddles, two deluxe kayak seats, foot pump, nylon carry bag, instructions, and repair kit. Just \$399, complete with free shipping. Dept. AT049B

www.seaeagle.com
800.748.8066

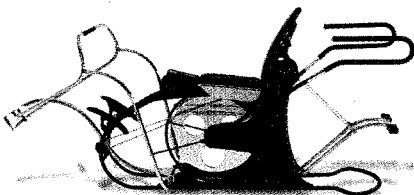
WALL WORDS



Easy-to-apply rub-on transfers for walls and mirrors! Preview your phrase, check the lengths, colors, and fonts before buying at wallwords.com. We also have trees, animals, and silhouettes. For 15% discount enter 20030944 online.

www.wallwords.com
888.422.6685

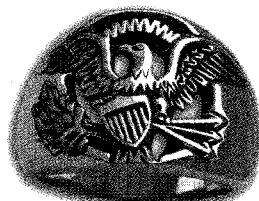
EXERCISE IN ONLY 4 MINUTES



Most people think that the 4 minutes and the price must be mistakes. They are not. Since 1990 we have shipped over 4,800 ROM machines from our 82,000 sq. ft. factory in North Hollywood, CA. People first rent it for 30 days at \$2,500 to try it. Rental applies to purchase. Then 97% buy it. Order a free DVD on our website.

www.fastworkout.com
818.504.6450

EAGLE RING COLLECTION



Senator, 14K Gold

A great gift for patriots of all political parties. Choose from thirty of our nation's distinguished U.S. eagles, masterfully handcrafted into the most striking ring collection in the world. Heavy in weight, extreme in detail and registered in the Library of Congress. Made in the USA, 100% guaranteed.

www.eaglerings.com
888.512.1333

ATHENA PHEROMONES™



Unscented
fragrance additives
for men and women

Enjoy more affection with Biologist's pheromones. Developed by Dr. Winnifred Cutler, co-discoverer of human pheromones in 1986.

"Both my wife and I use your Athena Pheromone products and feel we are starting a new relationship with each other." —Gene, TX

4-6 month supply from \$98.50.

www.athenainstitute.com
610.827.2200

Connect directly with these advertisers at www.theatlantic.com/store

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with subjective and idealist interpretations. The term *exploitation*, for example, should be not a moralizing one but a cold measure of the difference between use value and exchange value, or between the wages earned at the coal face and the real worth of that labor to the mine owner. Sometimes, making use of the statistical “Blue Books” furnished by the admirable Engels, Marx did manage to illuminate the ways in which the industrial system really functioned. But very often he allowed sheer outrage to guide his pen, and betrayed a dislike for money and business in *themselves*. In the first volume of *Capital* (the only one to be published in his lifetime; the succeeding ones were works of Talmudic exegesis by his disciples), he has capitalism speaking in the words of Shylock; includes an extract from *Timon of Athens* wherein money is described as the “common whore of mankind”; and offers still another denunciation of the cash nexus, from the *Antigone* of Sophocles. One of the most famous phrases of Marx’s vast correspondence during the writing of

the book expresses his hatred for having to work on “the economic shit,” and one recalls Lenin’s revealing opinion about gold—that it was fit only to supply the flooring for public lavatories. One pleasure in the rereading of Marx is to savor the trenchancy and aptness of his literary allusions. It was actually Engels who said that a Balzac was worth many Zolas, but Marx who—not always with rigorous consistency—tried to enforce the difference between novelist and pamphleteer.

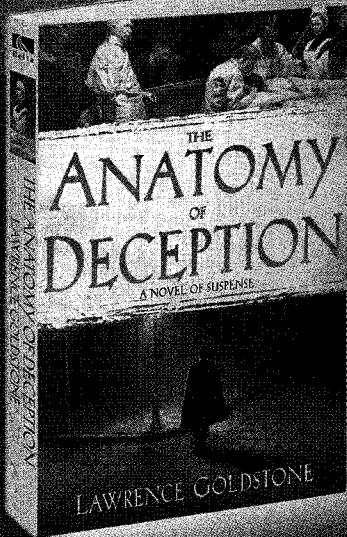
Whether one adopts a moralistic or an analytic approach, there is scant doubt that capitalism continues to outmaneuver all attempts by wage earners to shift the odds in favor of shorter hours and more pay. In the story of the class struggle, it’s invariably a case of one step forward and two steps back. I know of two passages that explain why this is so. One is the section of Robert Tressell’s great proletarian novel, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, in which the self-taught construction worker, Owen, borrows some hunks of bread during a lunch break and uses them in

an improvised shell game designed to show his fellow workers what easily gulled saps they are. The second is the central chapter of Wheen’s book, which adumbrates Marx’s own version of the same competition—or rather losing struggle.

As Wheen skillfully shows, there was an underlying love-hate relationship between Marx and capitalism. As early as the *Manifesto*, he had written of capitalism’s operations with a sort of awe, describing how the bourgeoisie had revolutionized all human and social and economic relations, and had released productive capacities of a sort undreamed-of in feudal times. Wheen speculates that Marx was being magnanimous because he thought he was writing capitalism’s obituary, and though this is a nice conceit, it does not quite explain Marx’s later failure, in *Capital*, to grasp quite how revolutionary capitalist innovation really was. (The chapter on new industrial machinery opens with a snobbish quotation from John Stuart Mill’s *Principles of Political Economy*: “It is questionable if

“The best books ... I’ve read this year
are the mystery/thriller/suspense novels of ... Robert Goddard.”
—STEPHEN KING

“Goddard is a master.”
—*Seattle Times*

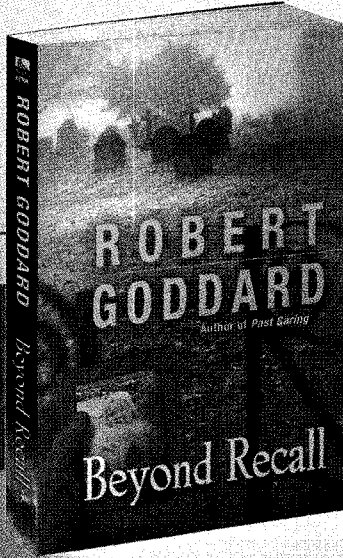


THE ANATOMY OF DECEPTION
A NOVEL OF SUSPENSE
LAWRENCE GOLDSTONE

DISCOVER A BRILLIANT MYSTERY

“A tale of murder, body-snatching,
and skullduggery.” —*Los Angeles Times*

“Vivid ... amazing.” —*The New York Times Book Review*



ROBERT GODDARD
Author of *Past Garing*
Beyond Recall

On sale 3/24 wherever paperbacks are sold



Delta
Trade Paperbacks

www.bantamdell.com

all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being." This must have seemed absurd even at the time, and it appears preposterous after the third wave of technological revolution and rationalization that modern capitalism has brought in its train.) There's also the not-inconsiderable question of capitalism's ability to decide, if not on the value of a commodity, at least on some sort of price for the damn thing. Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk and the other members of the Austrian school were able to point out this critical shortcoming of *Capital*—no pricing policy—during Marx's lifetime, and it would have been good if Wheen had found some room for the argument (especially vivid among Austrians for some reason) that went back and forth from Rudolf Hilferding to Joseph Schumpeter, whose imposing "creative destruction" theory of capitalism has its own dualism.

Rereading those wonderful Viennese polemics, I was reminded of a slight but hard-to-forget quip (in both of those respects rather typical) made in my hearing by the late Isaiah Berlin. His own book on Marx was as good as useless, but he would often have fun pretending to "mark" the old man for an exam in Oxford's course on philosophy, politics, and economics: "I think probably a beta in economics, yes really a beta, but rather better in philosophy and an alpha—one might even want to say an alpha *plus*—in politics." Had it been an examination in history, greatest of the muses, then who can say? (A. J. P. Taylor thought that "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" was, as a historical essay, "without flaw.") But even here, the estimation must give way to irony. At the conclusion of his article, John Cassidy wrote of Marx, "His books will be worth reading as long as capitalism endures." That would appear to mean that Marxism and capitalism are symbiotic, and that neither can expect to outlive the other, which is not quite what the prophet intended when he sat all those arduous days in that library in Bloomsbury, and swore hotly to Engels, "I hope the bourgeoisie will remember my carbuncles until their dying day." ■

Christopher Hitchens is an Atlantic contributing editor and a Vanity Fair columnist.

The Fastest Way to Learn a Language. Guaranteed.

Rosetta Stone® brings you a complete language-learning solution, wherever you are: at home, in-the-car or on-the-go. You'll learn quickly and effectively, without translation or memorization. You'll discover our method, which keeps you excited to learn more and more.

- You'll experience **Dynamic Immersion®** as you match real-world images to words spoken by native speakers so you'll find yourself engaged and learn your second language like you learned your first.
- Our proprietary Speech Recognition Technology evaluates your speech and coaches you on more accurate pronunciation. You'll speak naturally.
- Only Rosetta Stone has **Adaptive Recall™**, that brings back material to help you where you need it most, for more effective progress.
- And Rosetta Stone includes **Audio Companion™** so that you can take the Rosetta Stone experience anywhere you use a CD or MP3 player.

Innovative software. Immersive method. Complete mobility. It's the total solution. Get Rosetta Stone — **The Fastest Way to Learn a Language. Guaranteed®**

Arabic • Chinese (Mandarin) • Danish • Dutch • English (American) • English (British) • French • German • Greek • Hebrew • Hindi • Indonesian • Italian • Irish • Japanese • Korean • Latin • Pashto • Persian (Farsi) • Polish • Portuguese (Brazil) • Russian • Spanish (Latin America) • Spanish (Spain) • Swahili • Swedish • Tagalog (Filipino) • Thai • Turkish • Vietnamese • Welsh

SAVE 10%!

100% GUARANTEED
SIX-MONTH MONEY-BACK

Level 1	Reg. \$259	NOW \$233
Level 1&2	Reg. \$419	NOW \$377
Level 1,2&3	Reg. \$549	NOW \$494



©2008 Rosetta Stone Ltd. All rights reserved. Offer applies to Personal Edition only. Patent rights pending. Offer cannot be combined with any other offer. Prices subject to change without notice. Six-Month Money-Back Guarantee is limited to product purchases made directly from Rosetta Stone and does not include return shipping. Guarantee does not apply to an online subscription or to Audio Companion purchased separately from the CD-ROM product. All materials included with the product at the time of purchase must be returned together and undamaged to be eligible for any exchange or refund.

Call
(877) 275-7074

Online
RosettaStone.com/ams049

Use promotional code ams049 when ordering.
Offer expires July 31, 2009.

RosettaStone® 

COVER TO COVER

A Guide to Additional Releases



Mr. Playboy: Hugh Hefner and the American Dream

Steven Watts

WILEY

Just past the round rotating bed, beyond the hot-tub grotto but before the pajama-draped walk-in, lies ... what? If we're to believe this book, it's the Truth about Hugh Hefner—and, by proxy, about American life since the 1950s. Of course, the larger legacy of *Playboy* has been considered long and well (in these pages a couple of years ago, and elsewhere). But Watts, a history professor prone to interpreting American Dreamers (he has written stellar works on Henry Ford and Walt Disney), is wise to draw a narrow bead on Hef qua Hef, dividing his life into

tidy quadrants of postwar influence and iconography: as sexual liberator, avatar of consumerism, pop-culture purveyor, lightning rod for feminist ire. He also succeeds in identifying and exploring raging personal paradoxes—hedonist and workaholic, libertine and romantic, provocateur and traditionalist—while resisting the urge to attempt reconciliation. The Horatio-Alger-with-a-libido case he makes—where else but in America could a repressed midwestern boy rise, and fall into so many sacks, while creating and brand-managing a multimedia empire?—is only intermittently convincing. Still, there's plenty to enjoy here, from the factual wealth (Watts was granted access to the vast *Playboy* vaults and draws heavily on his

subject's compulsively kept scrapbook collection) to the photographs aplenty (some offer revelatory glimpses; others give off the whiff of stale cheesecake) to the fundamental pleasures of watching a larger-than-life figure scuttle social norms and satisfy his own lavish urges.

An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration

Mario Praz

THAMES & HUDSON

Mario Praz (1896–1982), longtime professor of English at the University of Rome, spent most of his life in his native Italy but was nonetheless one of the foremost authorities on English literature, and was knighted for his services to it. Best-known for his pioneering study *The Romantic Agony*, published when he was still in his 30s, Praz was also a brilliant art critic. This intense study of interior decoration and of domestic life in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries (first published in the 1960s and now gloriously back in print) is a distillation of his enormous learning and insight, drawing on paintings handsomely reproduced in this solid volume. Ranging from the famous (who has captured interiors better than Vermeer, or van der Weyden, or Zoffany?) to the lesser-known (Ivanov, Bendz, Gärtner, to name a few), Praz is always original without being eccentric. He's also adept at finding the apt literary quotation, ranging through sources from La Bruyère to Henry James. The sweep and quality of his mind raises this book far above the level of most others on this well-explored topic.

Delta Blues

Ted Gioia

NORTON

Donning a sleuth's sloped hat (and sometimes wearing it well), Gioia—the noted critic, historian, musician, and *History of Jazz* author—traces and parses the 12-bar profundities of Mississippi Delta blues and its purveyors, both well-known (Son House, Robert Johnson, Charley Patton) and long-forgotten (Geeshe Wiley, Kid Bailey, Mattie May Thomas). Chapter-length discussions,

JILLIAN TAMAKI

discussions, and deconstructions unfurl apace: the music's origins (plantation field hollers, ring shouts) and offshoots (rock, soul, funk); the tall tales and half-truths that wreathe the juke-joint principals; the alluvial region's racial, economic, and political complexities; and the music's inevitable migration, from rural isolation to urban amplification. Throughout, the author's skill and stylish writing is evident, his enthusiasm abundant. And when candor comes to the fore—as in Gioia's confession that only artistic humility and maturation gave him a deeper understanding of, and engagement with, a notationally simple but emotionally complex art form—the book really sings. The lingering question, then, is one of pure fundament: In a fertile folk-art field so well plowed by so many estimable authorities and enduring works (Robert Palmer's *Deep Blues*, Samuel Charters's *The Country Blues*, LeRoi Jones's *Blues People*, the list goes on), how and why is a new volume—one neither strictly biographical, sturdily counterintuitive, nor sweepingly comprehensive—truly germane? Gioia walks the thin blues line with skill and conviction, yet rarely takes a road less traveled.

The Peculiar Life of Sundays

Stephen Miller

HARVARD

Here is a cultural history of Sunday observance in the Christian West, drawn from ancient and contemporary sources, explored through the psychological dialectic of gladness and gloom. Miller acquaints the reader with the Sunday lives of observant Christians (Augustine, George Herbert, Samuel Johnson, Jonathan Edwards), non-observant Christians (John Ruskin, Robert Lowell), and lapsed Christians (Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Wallace Stevens), narrating a transformation of Sunday that began when Constantine's decree eclipsed pagan veneration for the sun god with Christian veneration for the Son of God. His focus on the Sabbatarian debates in America and Britain attests to the human need for a day of rest and

reflection. Post-secular anxiety can be heard in this story, as residual blue laws fade to black—giving way to idle amusements and banal commerce. Now that Sundays are free of burdensome forms, they seem burdened by formlessness, which may be why Pope Benedict XVI exhorts, "Give the soul its Sunday, give Sunday its soul."

The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution

Denis Dutton

BLOOMSBURY

Artistic predilection isn't a social or cultural construction; it's a downright Darwinian imperative. That's the provocative thesis teased and tested in this punchy tract, a hard-hitting amalgamation of critical theory and evolutionary science.

Tempering his contentious passion with winning doses of empiricism and good cheer, Dutton—the essayist, academic, public-radio enthusiast, and founder and editor of *Arts & Letters Daily*—seeks a way around "the hermetic discourse that deadens so much of the humanities." Treading a path strewn with evolutionary psychology, prehistoric extrapolations, and other cross-cultural interpretations—and interpreters like Pinker and Gould—that he deems outmoded, the author takes a cluster-concept approach, arguing fluently that artistic creation, apprehension, and appreciation (like language, sexuality, and religion) are largely, if not wholly, chromosomal; that they are far more innate and biological than absorbed or accidental. While Dutton doesn't spring all the aesthetic prisoners of postmodern thought, he does liberate many—or at least make the idea of a jailbreak from abstractionism seem both cogent and exhilarating.

Three Victories and a Defeat

Brendan Simms

BASIC

The author, a scintillating young Cambridge historian, argues that the coming of a German prince to the British throne in 1714 and the consequent link with the



FINANCIAL SURVIVAL
STRATEGY XIV

BALANCE YOUR BOOKS

with our books



Daedalus Books

The Best Browse
in Bargain Books

For a free catalog call
1.800.395.2665
salebooks.com

ALWAYS PAY THE LOWEST PRICE

the Atlantic

PRESENTS

ATLANTIC BUSINESS

ifts from Wall Street to
The Atlantic: Business
is an essential guide
es and conversations
ection of economics,
and regulation.
egan McArdle and
lumn and blog posts
and a team of experts
the site delivers
alysis of events
business landscape.

ags include commentary
performance, interviews
ss and policy leaders.
links to the most
ntent across the Web.
inctive voice and
ee, Megan makes
Business a destination
eyond the headlines.

sTheAtlantic.com

COVER TO COVER

House of Hanover made the United Kingdom into a true European power. In the next half century, the island nation became, thanks to a series of shifting alliances, a Continental juggernaut. Britannia's ascendance culminated in its victory over France in 1763 at the conclusion of the Seven Years' War. This success, which included expelling France from North America, led Britain into the dangerous error of focusing on its empire across the Atlantic, rather than on its hard-won, newfound place among the Continental powers. Soon faced with a rebellion in North America, it found itself without allies to help it; indeed, its European foes and former friends alike helped the American colonists succeed. Simms has a superb knowledge of diplomatic and military history to buttress his passionate, elegantly written argument that 18th-century Britain needed to concern itself less globally and concentrate its primary energies closer to home—an argument that has particular resonance at the beginning of the 21st century, as Britain fights in Iraq and Afghanistan and fails too often to pull its weight at the center of European decision-making.

**Linthead Stomp:
The Creation of Country Music
in the Piedmont South**

Patrick Huber

NORTH CAROLINA

A new, canny take on Old, Weird America, this colorful, contrarian book does much to dispel a spate of antediluvian tropes, musical and otherwise. The myth holds that prewar country music was a grassroots phenomenon, made and popularized by pickin'-and-grinnin' farmhands. But Huber, a history professor and co-author of *The 1920s: American Popular Culture Through History*,

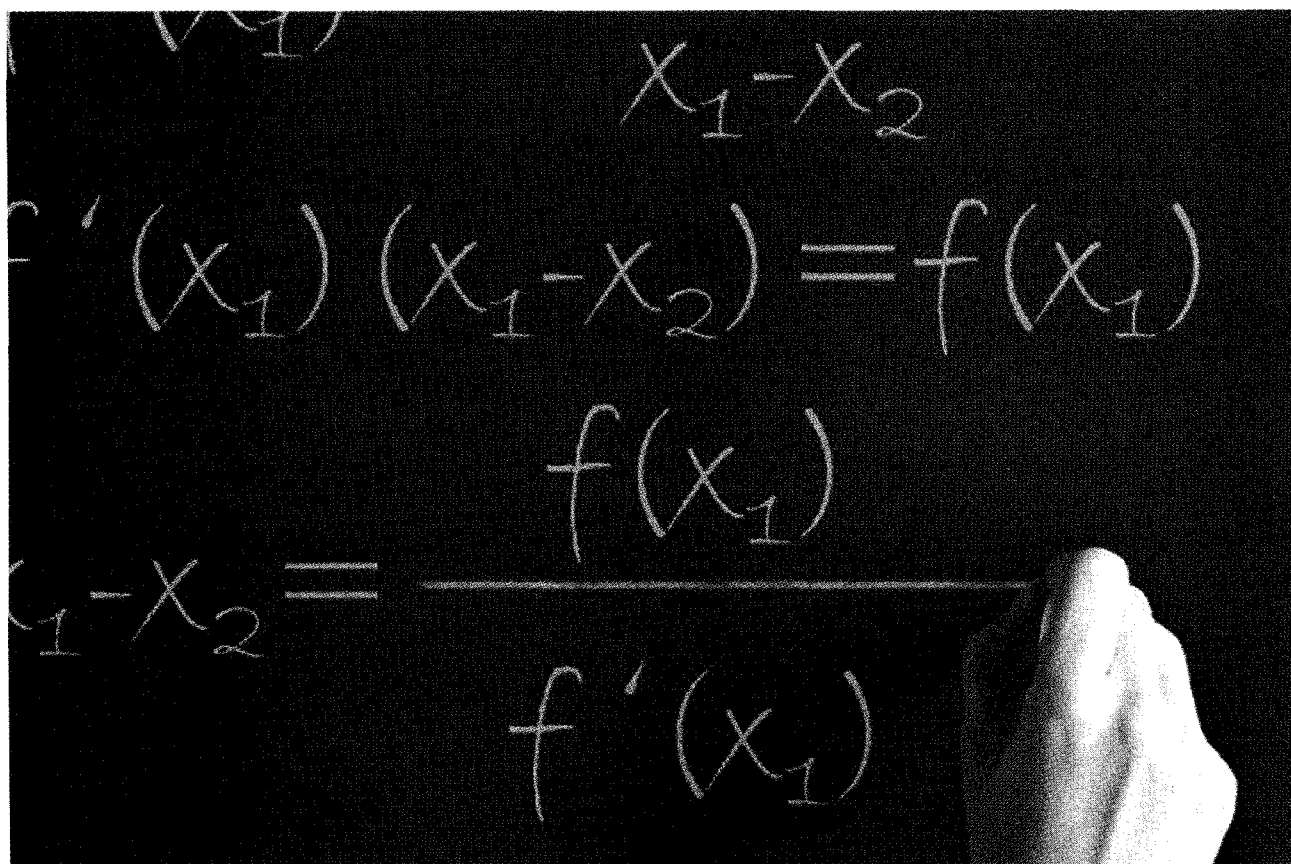
argues that it was Piedmont cities and mill towns and their industrial workforce that disseminated the region's rich sounds. Drawing on a wealth of archival sources and recordings, he asserts that country music circa 1922 to 1942 was, "in fact, as thoroughly modern in its origins and evolution as its quintessentially modern counterpart, jazz." Turning a welcome spotlight on talented oddballs such as Charlie Poole, Fiddlin' John Carson, and the Dixon Brothers, he elucidates the experiences, equally civilizing and compromising, of millhands in a rapidly industrializing South. And he contextualizes the give-and-take of the music and its makers—how, exactly, new social identities emerged, regional allegiances congealed, and a proto-countryopolitan sensibility took root and flourished in times both culturally and economically turbulent.

**William Hazlitt:
The First Modern Man**
Duncan Wu

OXFORD

Hazlitt, the great English essayist and critic, became the first modern sports-writer with his pioneering account of a boxing match, "The Fight." He was also the most consequential figure of English Romantic literature—except for the six great poets on whom he was an important influence. His vigorous championing of liberty has made him an enduring figure to the English political left: Michael Foot, the Labour Party's leader of the opposition to Margaret Thatcher, wrote a penetrating and stirring portrait of him. Wu at times engages in speculation unsupported by the evidence, but he's finely attuned to his subject's qualities and sympathetic to the many personal, professional, and religious struggles that so complicated Hazlitt's tumultuous life. ■

The Atlantic Monthly (ISSN 1072-7825) is published monthly except for combined issues in January/February and July/August by The Atlantic Monthly Group, 600 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20037 (202-266-6000). Periodicals postage paid at Boston, Mass., Toronto, Ont., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription queries: Atlantic Customer Care, Box 37585, Boone, IA 50037-0585 (or call 800-234-2411). Privacy: We make portions of our customer list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services we believe you may enjoy. If you do not want to receive this information, please write to the Customer Care address above. Advertising (212-284-7647) and Circulation (202-266-7197): 600 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20037. Subscriptions: one year \$39.95 in the U.S. and poss., add \$8.00 in Canada, includes GST (123209926); add \$15.00 elsewhere. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement 41385014. Canada return address: The Atlantic, P.O. Box 1051, Fort Erie, ON L2A 6C7. Back issues: send \$7.50 per copy to The Atlantic, Back Issues, 1900 Industrial Park Dr., Federalsburg, MD 21632 (or call 410-754-8219). Vol. 303, No. 3, April 2009. Copyright © 2009, by The Atlantic Monthly Group. All rights reserved. Postmaster: Send address changes to Atlantic Address Change, Box 37585, Boone, IA 50037-0585.



© 2008 Jupiterimages Corporation

GET A GRIP ON CALCULUS

Calculus has made it possible to build bridges that span miles of river, travel to the moon, and predict patterns of population change. Yet for all its computational power, calculus is the exploration of just two ideas—the derivative and the integral—both of which arise from a commonsense analysis of motion. Master them and open a new world for yourself!

So why didn't you grasp calculus the first time? In school, many of us didn't continue with mathematics and so this great achievement remains a closed door. And for those of us who did, award-winning Professor Michael Starbird—coauthor of the acclaimed math book for nonmathematicians, *The Heart of Mathematics: An Invitation to Effective Thinking*—can correct the clumsy classroom delivery that hid its beauty. In **Change and Motion: Calculus Made Clear, 2nd Edition**, the concepts and insights at the heart of calculus take center stage.

This course is one of The Great Courses®, a noncredit recorded college lecture series from The Teaching Company®. Award-winning professors of a wide array of subjects in the sciences and the liberal arts have made more than 250 college-level courses that are available now on our website.

Order Today!

Offer expires Friday, May 15, 2009

Change and Motion: Calculus Made Clear, 2nd Edition

Taught by Professor Michael Starbird, The University of Texas at Austin

Lecture Titles

1. Two Ideas, Vast Implications
2. Stop Sign Crime—The First Idea of Calculus—The Derivative
3. Another Car, Another Crime—The Second Idea of Calculus—The Integral
4. The Fundamental Theorem of Calculus
5. Visualizing the Derivative—Slopes
6. Derivatives the Easy Way—Symbol Pushing
7. Abstracting the Derivative—Circles and Belts
8. Circles, Pyramids, Cones, and Spheres
9. Archimedes and the Tractrix
10. The Integral and the Fundamental Theorem
11. Abstracting the Integral—Pyramids and Dams
12. Buffon's Needle or π from Breadsticks
13. Achilles, Tortoises, Limits, and Continuity
14. Calculators and Approximations
15. The Best of All Possible Worlds—Optimization
16. Economics and Architecture
17. Galileo, Newton, and Baseball
18. Getting off the Line—Motion in Space
19. Mountain Slopes and Tangent Planes
20. Several Variables—Volumes Galore
21. The Fundamental Theorem Extended
22. Fields of Arrows—Differential Equations
23. Owls, Rats, Waves, and Guitars
24. Calculus Everywhere

Change and Motion: Calculus Made Clear, 2nd Edition
Course No. 177
24 lectures (30 minutes/lecture)

DVDs ~~\$254.95~~ **NOW \$69.95**
+ \$10 Shipping, Processing,
and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee

Priority Code: 33437

1-800-TEACH-12
www.TEACH12.com/5atl

ACT NOW!

THE TEACHING COMPANY®
The Joy of Lifelong Learning Every Day®
GREAT PROFESSORS. GREAT COURSES. GREAT VALUE.
GUARANTEED.™

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

By Jeffrey Goldberg

How do you spot a fake financial expert? If his offer sounded too good to be true, we'd ignore him. But what if he sounds credible? In this economy, I think many people will be susceptible to financial snake oil.

Donald Ng, Fremont, Calif.

Dear Donald,
Fake financial experts include everyone who has in the past 10 years represented themselves as financial experts. Please do not worry: many otherwise clever people have fallen for their snake oil. I would like to note that oil taken from Chinese water snakes is rich in Eicosapentaenoic acid, an omega-3 fatty acid that leading scientists believe can relieve chronic joint pain. Snake oil represents, in today's market, a superior investment to most commercially available financial products. If you would like to purchase my revolutionary DVD explaining how to profit from this all-natural healing ointment from the comfort of your own home, e-mail me at the address below and we'll set you up with an introductory-rate E-Z Pay Plan via Western Union. Also, send me your Social Security number, for account verification.

My husband, with uncharacteristic frugality, seems unable to resist taking home the unopened jars of jelly, mustard, and ketchup that are left on room-service trays with the half-eaten eggs. You don't understand how many of these little jars we're accumulating. Where will it all end?

Suzanne C., Arlington, Va.

Dear Suzanne,
Where will it end? With you being rich, that's where! A 13-ounce jar of Bonne Maman jam (let's assume you're a top-shelf traveler) costs roughly \$4.29. Room-service jams are about an ounce each, so do the math. In these dark days, it makes sense to offset hotel bills by taking everything you can: little mustards and ketchups, soap, shampoo,



conditioner, forks, knives, glassware, pillows, mattresses, wall-mounted flat-screen televisions (call the concierge for a screwdriver). Hotel jelly happens not to be my obsession, though. Should the worst happen—systemic bank failure, meteor strike, Ebola, Nazis—I'll be subsisting entirely on little packets of duck sauce.

I keep losing air in the front passenger-side tire of my car. I've had it checked by three different mechanics, but they all claim that they can't find any punctures in it. I also had the valve stem replaced, knowing that that's often the culprit. No luck. I cringe at the thought of replacing the whole thing. There must be something else affecting this!

Joy Eakin, Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Joy,
I subcontracted out your question to Tom and Ray Magliozzi, the Tappet Brothers, who host NPR's *Car Talk*. Here's what they told me: "What usually works for us is replacing the car.

That almost always solves the problem." They also issued this serious diagnosis: "A bad wheel rim is letting the air out. It could be bent, cracked, rusted, or porous. Or missing."

Why do hotels put only "man-size" hangers in the closets? Have any female hotel managers ever tried hanging their own dresses or blouses on these large hangers and then seen the bumpy outcroppings in the sleeves?

Eva Groening, Washington, D.C.

Dear Eva,
Let me try to explain. You see, this is a man's, man's, man's world. Man made the cars to take us over the road, man made the trains to carry heavy loads. Man made electric light to take us out of the dark, man made the boat for the water, like Noah made the ark. Man also makes hotel hangers. ▀

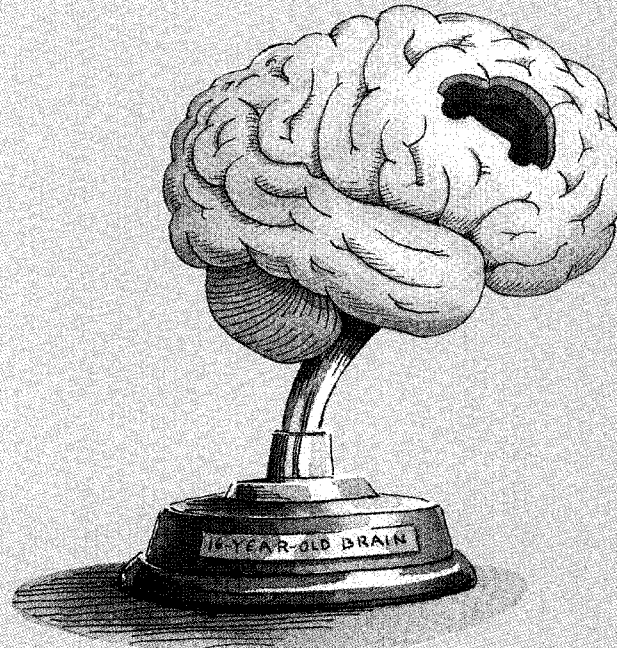
To submit your question or request for advice, please e-mail advice@theatlantic.com. Include your full name and address.

JASON FORD/HEART AGENCY

Why do most 16-year-olds drive like they're missing a part of their brain?



BECAUSE THEY ARE.



Even bright, mature teenagers sometimes do things that are "stupid."

But when that happens, it's not really their fault. It's because their brain hasn't finished developing. The underdeveloped area is called the dorsal lateral prefrontal cortex. It plays a critical role in decision making, problem solving and understanding future consequences of today's actions. Problem is, it won't be fully mature until they're into their 20s.

It's one reason 16-year-old drivers have crash rates three times higher than 17-year-olds and five times higher than 18-year-olds. Is there a way for teens to get their driving experience more safely — giving their brains time to mature as completely as their bodies? **Allstate thinks so.**

STRENGTHEN GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING (GDL) LAWS.

GDL laws put limitations on teen driving so kids can gain experience safely. Since North Carolina implemented one of the most comprehensive GDL laws in the country, it has seen a 25% decline in crashes involving 16-year-olds.

HAVE THE DRIVING TALK.

75% of teens surveyed said their parents would be the best influence in getting them to drive more safely. The Allstate Parent-Teen Driving Contract can help start the conversation. **Contact an Allstate Agent to get a free copy or visit Allstate.com/teen for the interactive contract.**

Let's help our teenagers not miss out on tomorrow just because they have something missing today.

It's time to make the world a safer place to drive. That's Allstate's Stand.



Allstate
You're in good hands.

Auto
Home
Life
Retirement

Sources: National Science Teacher Association, 2007; U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2007; The Allstate Foundation Report on Teen Driving, 2005.
The Cupped Hands logo is a registered service mark and "That's Allstate's Stand" is a service mark of Allstate Insurance Company, © 2009 Allstate Insurance Company, Northbrook, IL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OW OPEN FOR BUSINE

SERVING 10 CITIES IN AFRICA